

BUZZWORDS '86: CENSORSHIP, COMMITMENT, CD'S
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Music CONNECTION[®]

THE ALTERNATIVE MUSIC TRADE PUBLICATION



JET SET VOCALIST

ROBERT PALMER

Pressure Drop to Power Station

PAUL YOUNG

and the Rebirth of British R&B Singing

MAKING IT AS A VOCALIST

DAVID KERSHENBAUM

ON THE PRODUCER/A&R INTERFACE

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Key Issues Involve Censorship, Commitment

by *Kenny Kerner*

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The music biz is roaring into 1986 with a full head of steam—but there may be a roadblock or two up ahead. Will the PMRC further muck up the works? Will Michael Jackson sell a hundred-million units? Will there be a CD explosion? And (to quote I.R.S. President Jay Boberg) will the "major labels promote and market the records they release for more than three weeks"? We'll see.

THE REBIRTH OF BRITISH SOUL SINGING

Robert Palmer:

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Paul Young:

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For a time, the Rotten/Strummer school of anti-singing all but silenced the venerable British blue-eyed soul contingent. But in 1985, vocal virtuosos made a dramatic comeback, led by blue-collar crooner Paul Young and the suave, soulful Robert Palmer. If we get our wish, technique, taste, and talent will ultimately prevail in their struggle with fake funk.

Voices in the Crowd:

Breaking in as a Professional Singer

by *Lawrence Henry*

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What do Richard Page, Gloria Rusch, Joe Turano, Arno Lucas, Katey Sagal, and Terri Garrison have in common? They've all managed to make a living—if not a killing—as singers in Tinseltown. Here's how they did it.

PRODUCER PROFILE

David Kershbaum

A Free Spirit From the Ivory Tower

by *Carolyn Farris*

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Producer Kershbaum is a low-key musical maverick who, for a good part of his career, modulated his innate sense of adventure in order to run A&M's A&R department. Now working independently, he's able to juxtapose his eclectic spirit with an insider's understanding of the biz—and look sharp, too.

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Feedback

The Honest Truth

Dear *Music Connection*:

Thanks for Lawrence Henry's "Growing Up at O'Mahony's" in your 8th Anniversary issue (Dec. 9)—as brave and moving a piece of work on the effect of music in one's life as I've read on these pages. As a writer/journalist, I know how much courage it takes to turn from the delights of lambasting others to revealing the unpretty truths lying within our own selves. Henry did it with unflinching honesty, and moreover, avoided succumbing to the easy over-emotionalism and egoism a lesser writer would have fallen prey to. The point, of course—as he says so well—is the music, not the highs, the liquor (or, I might add, the money) . . . always the music.

And while we're crediting people, if anyone out there hasn't noticed—Bud Scoppa, in his two years at MC, has taken a rather uneven, often mawkish magazine (let's call a spade a spade) and turned it into a sharp, relevant, and often truly inspired alternative. And Bud, I dare you to print this letter in its entirety.

Judy Raphael
Los Angeles, CA

Ed. reply: *If you insist.*

Tattoo It

Dear *Music Connection*:

Regarding John Bitzer's article, "To Live & Die in Clubland: A Survival Blueprint" (Dec. 9): Tattoo It—bronze it on the inside of your anvil cases, but listen to it. This is an incredibly important piece of information to all of us struggling musicians, and a reminder to the rest of us who've had a taste of success and who are again back at the musical drafting table.

Numbers! The basic principle in any sale-oriented result from a product—be it music (live or disc), cereals, clothes, or audiences. How many do the people buy? How well does your audience receive you?

One more point—the climactic ego factor: "Not a single person in the world cares how good you are." Only YOU DO!

Kevin E. Shephard
Bassist/Writer
Van Nuys, CA

Chapped

Dear *Music Connection*:

I just finished reading a letter from reader Julie Freeman of Macey Lipman Marketing who was "very impressed" with the Holly Knight interview (Feedback, Nov. 25). I'm very curious as to what "impressed" her. When I found out (by just a phone call) that Macey Lipman Marketing is representing Holly Knight and Devise, I thought that was why such a boastful letter was written about Holly. Maybe Julie was "impressed" because Holly claims to be "close friends" with so many heavyweights, or maybe it was the way she explained to us how "it was kind of unfair" what she did to Billy Meshel and how she "sort of bypassed him." Being the talker Holly appears to be, maybe she can explain how you can be "kind of" unfair and how you "sort of" bypass someone?

In regard to her comments on Nicky Chinn, not only did she come off as not being a lady (which she claims were not her intentions), but as a complete unprofessional. She is no stranger to this industry, and common sense should tell her how unprofessional it is to trash people, especially in print. But the worst part

about that was it sounded as though she was speaking for Mike Chapman. With no disrespect to Chapman, there are at least two sides to every story. If she had had her successes with Nicky Chinn I wonder what she would have said about Mike Chapman.

All in all, in my objective opinion (meaning I'm not working for Holly Knight's marketing company), I found her interview most annoying, but I do enjoy a lot of her songs—or does Mike Chapman write most of them, and Holly just change an "and" to a "but" or an "is" to a "was"? Con someone else.

An Embarrassed Woman
Van Nuys, CA

Hello, It's We

Hallelujah *Music Connection*:

Re "Todd is God" (Nov. 25): We are f-f-flabbergasted; d-d-d-dumbfounded! Your expose on the continuing saga of Todd Rundgren was vastly enlightening. Since our initiation in the late Seventies into "Toddmusic," we have never come across a publication that has done such justice to an artist as deserving as Todd, or has given such an accurate account of those on the Utopian wavelength. Being a Todd/Utopia fan requires a great deal of determination because of Todd's "for me" style of recording—this leaves no choice for the "faithful" except to roll with the many faces and changes of Todd.

We concur wholeheartedly with Bud Scoppa's Top 30 potential chartopping gems—sometimes it seems that there is a conspiracy against this renaissance man within the record biz. We feel one reason for this may be that the head honchos couldn't sell their junk-rock to people once they were exposed to the uncompromised integrity (understatement of the year) of Todd Rundgren. How anyone could possibly listen to the "music" (not to mention lyrics) of today's standard FM drivel is beyond us. How could the recent single, "Something to Fall Back On," not be Number One? Mystifying to us. We're thankful for artists with such high standards as Todd, Utopia, Frank Zappa, Godley & Creme, Steve Hillage, Kate Bush, Laurie Anderson, and David Byrne, to name a few. These artists represent a new realm of consciousness being explored by many people in today's musical community, not to mention all walks of life.

Todd's longevity speaks for itself. (Men Without what? A Flock of who?) He may make albums merely for his own listening pleasure, but the thousands of Rundgrenites down here on the street feel that part of their lives are "laid down in them grooves," too. Toddmusic has been a touchstone for many people—maybe a song prompted you to find out about things you may never have even thought of, especially the "eastern intrigue" segments of Todd's huge body of work. Needless to say, we feel it is an extremely valuable Point Of View; so, for anyone out there who would like more info into the adventures of the Toddlers, contact the Nexus, P.O. Box 11771, Baltimore, MD. (Please include S.A.S.E.) They're a great group of people whose main intent is to keep the connection among the fans themselves, and provide invaluable info as to touring and other Rundgren projects.

And remember, as THE Wizard, THE True Star himself once said, "I only want to see if you'd give up on me, but there's always more."

The Cincinnati Coalition for Utopia
(Dan Mischler, Nancy Adkins,
Tim O'Connor, Tim Kaelin,
Julie Ferrara, Jenny Feck)
Cincinnati, OH

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ED. INTRO

Music Connection is pleased to announce the appointment of Kenny Kerner to the position of Associate Editor/News. Kerner has been writing about music since 1970, breaking in as associate editor at *Cash Box*. He also co-produced (with Richie Wise) numerous records by such artists as Kiss, Gladys Knight & the Pips, and the Stories during the Seventies. Requests for news stories and concert reviews should henceforth be directed to him.

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GUEST COMMENTARY

What's Wrong With Black Music?

Regarding black music versus white music, let me drop a bombshell and watch the debris fly: Ninety-nine percent of current black music is lousy. Take a look/listen around and think about it, *whatever* color you are. Were I a young black musician looking for a creative, innovative environment, I'd be very discouraged. Were I lucky, I might be in a "color-blind" group—a World Beat or ska combo, let's say, or one of such unique groups as Culture Club, Big Country, or Springsteen's E Street Band. Otherwise, I'd be stuck with tired musical conventions that at their worst have racist overtones. And if I were in an aspiring black group, where, exactly would my group play? Stumped? Me, too.

Not long ago, the Los Angeles Reader ran a feature theorizing that black entertainment in America has always consisted of a few caricatures, which every "crossover act," from Louis Armstrong to Michael Jackson, has represented. An extreme theory, but, again, think about it. If the majority of current "black" music was "white," the white elite wouldn't pay any attention. When was the last time you heard a *different* "black" record? Scratch? Some guy diddling records around! Rap? Speaking in rhyme to rhythm's nothing new. Prince is constantly touted as the black star of the Eighties, but his sound (and that of his followers) is disco, circa 1975.

It's time to get rid of the idea of "black" music and "white" music. Black music is part of black culture, but black charts are one of the few remaining institutions of segregation. You all understand, however, that this means no more carrying-on about some race getting ripped off or selling out. Remember when some commentators got all worked up over Michael Jackson's "Beat It," all because Jackson used a white guitarist? In fact, why *didn't* Jackson use a black guitarist for that solo?

I'd like to think the black Eddie Van Halen (Eric Clapton, Stuart Adamson—or the new Jimi Hendrix, for that matter), is out there. Not the "funk" Van Halen. The black Van Halen. And the black Duran Duran, Tears for Fears, DEVO, Bruce Springsteen, Eurythmics... and black artists who are as innovative as those white artists are.

When we complain about the number of blacks here-or-there, we must ask ourselves if the ones we so avidly wave the banner for really represent 1985 and beyond. Or are they simply 1975—or 1975—warmed over? —Lyn Jensen

Jensen, who's free, white, and over 21, contributes reviews to MC.

HOLLYWOOD

C L O S E U P :



Vocal Coach Ron Anderson on Training for Rock Singing

by Lawrence Henry

Ron Anderson is one of Los Angeles' foremost voice teachers. He doesn't advertise. He doesn't have to. He has an unlisted phone, which nonetheless rings all the time. Like a psychiatrist, he does not reveal the names of his clients. In the following interview, Anderson discusses the art of singing rock & roll, and the training he regards as a necessary part of contemporary rock & roll singing.

MC: Is there any difference between the techniques of singing rock and singing classical music?

Anderson: Basically, the technique [of rock singing] is the same as classical techniques. The motor functions themselves, diaphragm support, focusing the voice, bright vowel sounds, are the same. The difference is the sound of the overtones. [In rock], they're a much more frontal sound, a more pharyngeal "enh" sound, which is on the outside part of the vocal cords. It's a much lighter, more fluid sound than was used in the Fifties, when singers were screaming, and very heavy.

MC: Like Little Richard?

Anderson: Exactly. A lot of singers were very young, and had no training at all. In fact, it was fashionable not to. A lot of those singers ended up singing for two or three years, and then getting nodes. And their voices were destroyed.

MC: Is this caused by belting the body voice up past the point where the body voice is appropriate?

Anderson: You can learn to do that without hurting yourself. But that's technique. At that point, people didn't take time. They found these guys on the street, let's face it. The businessmen, the producers, could hear a product that was commercial, and could sell. Philadelphia was a place where they found a great deal of talent. These kids were very talented. The smart ones gradually started studying. The ones that are still singing still study.

Today, with the way budgets are, voice training is imperative. To promote an album might take five months of one-nighters, six nights a week. Radio interviews on top of that—without technique, you'll never make it.

MC: Rock demands a certain range, it seems to me. There aren't very many sopranos or baritones. Men and women sing about the same range, where tenor and alto cross over.

Anderson: Many of these singers are baritones who have learned how to use their voices in the pharyngeal range, a higher range, with a much more pointed sound. It's like playing a violin. You learn how to stop down a string, and shorten it, and you learn to do that with your vocal cords, too, and sing with part of them.

MC: I've certainly heard a lot of rock singers bemoan the fact that they don't have higher voices.

Anderson: That's because they haven't trained properly. In rock, when it's done correctly, you can take it just about as high as you want to. I have over 300 voice students, and three-fourths of those students are rock singers. I don't have one male student who doesn't at least sing a G above high C.

MC: That's pretty impressive.

Anderson: No. It's just technique. I'm not the only teacher in town. I know four or five other teachers, and all their students do the same thing.

MC: Can the singer who's working in a club every night, and starts to encounter problems, begin to see immediate benefit from studying?

Anderson: Immediately. The very first day. When a singer comes to me, the very first thing I do is check out the voice for nodules, or damage, or diseased cords. It's done by very simple exercises, checking the middle, upper, and lower registers. If there's any damage, I refer them to one of two doctors. It's a tremendous responsibility. You're not playing games.

You're training somebody in their livelihood.

MC: I was under the impression that it might take time to learn to apply technique to actual performance.

Anderson: It may take time, depending on how intelligent the student is, and how fast the student learns. But they should immediately feel the pressure coming off the throat. If they know what to do, they can step off between sets, do a few exercises, and immediately take the swelling out of the vocal cords.

MC: I imagine it's common to find damaged voices among performers who've been working a lot of club dates.

Anderson: A lot. There's a lot of damage.

MC: What's characteristic of that damage?

Anderson: Thickness in the center of the vocal cords, caused by over-singing, which makes the cords swell. The center part of the voice won't hold together. It's caused by singing too heavy, by over-singing, by not having proper monitors, by competing with an instrument that's plugged into a wall, not with another vocal instrument—you're always going to lose, in that case.

MC: What do these injuries feel like to the singer?

Anderson: The singer will notice, especially on an "ee" vowel, they have air escaping. That's the beginning of it. A breathy, raspy sound. It may be desirable, because of style. But if they can't take that sound out of it, they'd better be checked, because there's something wrong.

MC: Is there pain?

Anderson: No. There may be hoarseness, but no pain.

MC: Rock singing also can involve tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

Anderson: The very first thing I say when I go into a [recording] session is, "If there are any drugs, get rid of them. Either they go or I go." Because I can't do my job. Particularly cocaine will destroy your voice. Liquor? Most people have an allergy to it, and don't realize it. It will cause swelling of the cords. Also it desensitizes the area where you have to have feeling. Smoking can dry the throat, just like cocaine.

MC: What about the question of a big voice versus a small voice?

Anderson: It doesn't really matter in rock. Voice size in classics means a tremendous amount. A lot of teachers say that these voices are born, the huge voices. I don't agree with that. I had a very small voice when I started out, and it has developed into an immense voice—through training.

News

BENEFITS

Stars Shine at NAS Songwriters Salute

by Sue Gold

BEVERLY HILLS—The theme of Hit Records Begin With Hit Songs was echoed loud and clear during the "Salute to the American Songwriter" benefit show sponsored by the National Academy of Songwriters. The event, which spotlighted the *songwriters* rather than the artists who took the songs to the top of the charts, lasted some three hours and fell just short of a complete sellout at the 1,400-seat Beverly Theatre.

According to NAS publicity director Kevin Henry, bringing more attention to the people who write the songs was one of the reasons for the show. "There's a big problem with the public when it comes to who wrote the songs. A

lot of people think that the person singing is the person who wrote it. "White Nights," as sung by Phil Collins, is a perfect example. It was written by Stephen Bishop, but many DJ's give Collins credit because he's singing it. That's the kind of problem we're trying to clear up."

The concept for the show originated at one of the NAS monthly meetings. "I think it was Tom Snow who came up with the idea of putting on a concert," Henry said. "He suggested it and the next thing we knew, people were out looking for concert halls."

The show itself included performances by hosts Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil and other singer/songwriters such as Jon Lind doing his version of the Madonna hit,

"Crazy for You"; Larry Weiss singing "Rhinstone Cowboy"; Tom Snow, "He's So Shy"; and an Alan Bergman medley including "The Way We Were" and "You Don't Bring Me Flowers." Ben Weisman, who wrote over fifty hit songs for Elvis Presley, also performed a medley of tunes made famous by the King.

While there were many artist/songwriters on the bill (David Foster, Eric Carmen, Stephen Bishop, Melissa Manchester, Deniece Williams, Jeffrey Osborne), being able to see and hear the songwriters perform *their own compositions* made the evening special.

With the show still fresh in our memories, NAS is already talking about another one for next year and is even hoping to make this an annual event. Dean Pitchford, who scripted the show, summarized: "We're hoping to eventually enter into the realm of television and broadcast this event. It would be a shame not to commune this feeling and give people a chance to see the writers who wrote the songs that are so popular." ■

EDUCATION

L.A. NARAS Completes Support Program for Local Music Departments

by Murdoch McBride

HOLLYWOOD—The Los Angeles Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (L.A. NARAS) just completed an educational support campaign where celebrities donated equipment to the music departments of three local schools.

Musician Tom Scott and members of L.A. NARAS were among those present at A&M Studios where the celebrity players donated key pieces of their equipment to local music departments. Recipients of these prizes were chosen by the number of students each school had at the recent NARAS Seminars, also held at A&M. Strong turnouts of students necessitated a three-way tie for best attendance at the seminar, and all prizes were divided equally among winning schools.

The donated equipment included a variety of electronic gear which will enhance the music pro-

grams at the L.A. High School for the Arts, Fullerton College, and Dominguez Hills High School. Some of the pieces that will be put to use in local music education include a Hohner Clavinet with Castlebar, Oberheim OB-X, a Yamaha CS-80, a Casio C-2101, a Yamaha YK-10, along with an E-mu E-Drum and a Bochla Mini 1.

Known best for being the organization which sponsors the Grammy Awards each year, L.A. NARAS put together this recent equipment donation as part of a general effort to widen the Los Angeles chapter's scope of influence and support. As L.A. NARAS vice president Marshall Leib explained at the equipment giveaway, "We do things other than present Grammy Awards. We specifically want to let the world know that the L.A. Chapter of NARAS is out there doing other things for education. We don't just put on the party."

Tom Scott spoke exclusively with *MC* at the donation ceremony, commenting that, "It's a pleasure doing this. When I came up through high school and junior high, I had a great opportunity largely because of the tireless efforts of a few devoted music teachers who stayed after school to work with the extracurricular groups. Now that I'm a working professional, I think the least I can do is give some of my good fortune back and see that the tradition of helping these kids is carried on. It gives them a chance to find out what's going on in the industry, and offers them something of a head start."

Scott also indicated that he has discussed a speaking program with L.A. NARAS, where he would join other artists in visiting local schools. "We just talked about going into Dominguez Hills," Scott explained, "ya know, to pep 'em up a little bit." When asked what specific advice he would give the young music students, the virtuoso laughed and said, "Wait till I retire." He later added, "I'd be happy to pass along any advice I could in terms of my career and what I've done."

L.A. NARAS indicated that details about the speakers program and other educational projects would be forthcoming in the near future. ■

SIGNINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

by Kenny Kerner

The David Lee Roth band is beginning to take shape, with guitarist Steve Vai (Alcatraz) and bassist Billy Sheehan (Talas) signing on.

Black Sabbath, featuring Tony Iommi, producer/writer Peter Wolf, and Styx guitarist James Young, now with Michael Levine Public Relations. *The Seventh Star*, due from Warner Bros., features eight new Iommi tunes. The solo debut from Young, *City Slicker*, was produced by Jan Hammer.

Gary Landis has been named director of programming for the Westwood One Radio Networks.

Private Domain, San Diego-based quintet, is newly signed to **Curb/MCA Records**. Tour dates for 1986 are now being booked by APAs Jim Rissmiller.

L.A.-based rock group **Johnny Outrageous** has signed a long-term management contract with **Laren/Fields Management**.

Stu Yahm has been retained by the **Suite Beat Music Group** as a consultant in all phases of the label's activities. First project is the release of a new mini LP by Pasadena's **New Marines**.

Mark Edwards, formerly with Steeler, has been recording a solo instrumental album for **Metal Blade Records** with a little help from his friends, **Bill Liseegang (Nina Hagen)**, **Claude Schnell (Dio)**, **Tim Bogert (Vanilla Fudge)**, and **Eric Scott (formerly with Alice Cooper)**.

Orange County heavy metal band **Thrasher** has signed a management contract with **Avanti Entertainment Management**, based in Florida. Oh, those phone bills!

Dual Key Records' first two signings are U.K. singer/songwriter **Robert King**, formerly of Scottish band the Scars, and Detroit-based rockers the **Buzztones**, who are currently being produced by **Don Was of Was (Not Was)** fame.

Gene Vanno Management has announced the formation of **Who Knew? Records**, and is releasing a brand new album from **Tower of Power** in February.

Ray Pablo Falconer, best known for producing **UB40**, is now in Sausalito's Studio D handling production chores for the **Uptones'** first LP.

Gino Tanasescu has joined **Bill Romeo's Working Products** as in-house producer. Tanasescu was responsible for home videos such as the **Motown Time Capsule** and **Lyle Alzado's** exercise video, which featured music by **Michael Sembello**.

Renee Schreiber promoted to manager of artist relations/television for **Atlantic Records** in New York.

Sam Freeze and **Wild Bill Scott** have joined the on-air DJ staff over at **KNAC Radio** and can be heard on weekends.

Sarah McMullen & Company Public Relations now officially open in Santa Monica. Clients include **Roy Orbison** and the upcoming **Elton John 1986 Summer Tour of America**.

The **Chappell/Intersong Music Group** has named **Maxyne Lang** vice president of special projects. Ms. Lang, working out of the New York headquarters, will be responsible for the promotion of the company's standard and theatre catalog of songs.

LOCAL NOTES

Compiled by
Bud Scoppa &
Kenny Kerner

Contributors to this section include Lawrence Henry, Cindy Lamb, and Jim Maloney.

BELATED BULL: The Bull Durham Band came in second in the Country sector of our '85 Pick of the Players Poll, but you didn't see their picture, didja? That's 'cause we...er... misplaced it. Since our last deadline, however, we did some much-needed cleaning up around here, and wouldn'tcha know, the durned photo turned up. So, in the spirit of better-late-than-never, here's the Bull, folks.

A VIEW TO A KEEL: Some big names in rockdom dropped in at New York's Electric Lady Studios during the recording of the second Keel album, now being produced by Kiss' Gene Simmons. Singing background vocals on Keel's "Raised on Rock" is Michael Des Barres of the Power Station, while "No Pain, No Gain" features the vocals of former Angel Greg Guffria.

genre." Translation: "How the hell are we gonna sell this one?"

Dr. Henry is treating his ennui with alternate applications of *Shampoo* and *Bananas*. Classes will resume after the holidays.

—LH
BOBBY Z. & THE HEARTBREAKERS has a mythic ring to it. As he discovered at Farm Aid, Dylan has found his Hawks of the Eighties.



Photo by Louis D. Modica

SAD DECEMBER: Kurtis Teel & Richard Sandford, two mainstays of the L.A. musical community, died early in December. Versatile bassist Teel (pictured), who was 32, built a reputation as a players' player during stints with the Ojays, Etta James, Iron Butterfly, Rita Coolidge, and Valerie Carter; he was also a sought-after session musician. He died of congestive heart failure December 2. Sandford, who made a name for himself as drummer for Great Buildings, was more recently the owner/engineer of the always-busy Underground Studios, located in Inglewood. He died in his sleep of undetermined causes December 8. Contributions may be made to the Richard Sandford Memorial Fund at St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica... As we neared our deadline, we received word that an auto accident had claimed the life of D. Boon, the inventive and critically acclaimed leader of the Minutemen. And on December 22, the enormously popular Tommy Thomas, longtime owner of the Palomino, died of a heart attack at age 61. Meanwhile, in London, Ian Stewart, legendary pianist for the Rolling Stones (he's credited for co-founding the group) died of an apparent heart attack on December 13; he was 47. We'll sincerely miss them all.

ATTENTION ENTERTAINMENT JOURNALISM MAJORS: Dr. Henry will not be able to hold the first class in his fall lecture series, "Interpreting the Press Release." He suffered an acute attack of ennui at a screening of Ray Davies' new movie, *Return to Waterloo*. Students are referred to the appropriate edition of *Cliff's Notes*. Dr. Henry's graduate teaching assistant has made available the following *precis*:

The press release says: "The story line of *Return to Waterloo* portrays a middle-class commuter's emotional crisis as he attempts to confront reality and fantasy, love and violence."

Translation: "Nothing much happens, but we hope you'll sit through it anyway."

Press release: "...the music and song lyrics drive the story. Actual dialog is minimal."

Translation: Please excuse the terrible lip-synching.

Press release: "Of the film, Ray Davies says, 'The train is a metaphor for an internal journey.'"

Translation: "I've got nothing to say, but it's okay, good morning-guh!"

Press release: "*Return to Waterloo* is a milestone," says Charles Mitchell, Vice President Program Production for RCA Video Productions. "Its narrative sophistication and emotional impact set standards for a new

BACK TO THE FUTURE: Late last year, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Roy Orbison were reunited at the original Sun Records Studio in Memphis, where they changed rock'n'roll history forever back in the Fifties. Cash and producer Chips Moman put the project together, with a TV special and LP anticipated relatively soon. Additionally, as a fitting tribute to one of its pioneers, Cinemax will air a one-hour special entitled "Rockabilly Session—Carl Perkins & Friends," which will feature a backup band consisting of—now check this out (from left in pic)—Lee Rocker, Eric Clapton, the seemingly ageless George Harrison, Earl Slick, Ringo Starr, Dave Edmunds (who also served as musical director for the special), and Slim Jim Phantom. Taped at London's Limehouse Studios in October, 1985, the show features Perkins and pals ripping into "Blue Suede Shoes," "Mean Woman Blues," "Honey Don't," "Everybody's Tryin' to Be My Baby," "Boppin' the Blues," "Matchbox," and a handful of other C.P. classics guaranteed to put a smile back on your face and start your feet a-tappin'. Cinemax will air the special on January 5, 10, 14, 20, 25, and 31. Miss it if you dare! [Ed. Note: If ever a call-to-arms went out for a video and an album of a performance, this is it. Cinemax, if you're listening, get thee to a studio!]

CAREER MOVES CORNER: Everybody's favorite Repo Man, actor Harry Dean Stanton, has been tuning up his career as a musician. Doing some blow-away harmonica work and singing both in Disney's *One Magic Christmas* and with Sam Shepard in *Fool for Love* may well Harry Dean into a Hohner rep overnight. Stanton also recently completed work with

Carole King and kids in the Lou Adler reproduction for *Care Bears*. The animated feature will have Harry Dean singing the voice of the lion. Moving on to the weightier stuff...Procol (whatever happened to those guys?) Harum invited Harry Dean to be a part of their new conceptual video of their '67 classic, "A Whiter Shade of Pale." Keep an eye peeled for this one in the near future as part of a series of "greatest hit" videos to air on KCOP. Known for his jams with Kristofferson, the Dillards, and Dylan, Stanton has kept his reputation alive by sitting in on the Rave-Ups' version of "Cottonfields." Recording the Mexican traditional ballad, "Cancion Mexteca," with Ry Cooder for the brilliant Wim Wenders film, *Paris, Texas*, sparked the new attention to Stanton's love for music. "I'd love to be in a film

gig on the same night, as Duff wrote, but the problem was the result of a booking miscue on the part of the Lingerie, according to Chilton's agent, Frank Riley. Alex did indeed perform at the Lingerie that evening, after Riley nimbly rescheduled the S.F. gig; this eleventh-hour shifting was necessary for two reasons: (1) The L.A. date was intended to expose Chilton to his new label, L.A.-based Big Time Records; and (2) Alex developed a reputation as a flake in the mid-Seventies (after becoming a critics' darling for a pair of brilliant and influential albums as leader of Big Star early in the decade), and neither Chilton nor Riley wanted to perpetuate that now-inaccurate rep. And that, as Paul Harvey says, is the rest of the story.

COLLECTORS' DILEMMA: You've undoubtedly read here, there, and



about music—to star as a singer or musician," Stanton said during a recent interview, "country, pop, even ballads. It doesn't matter, because the way I see it, if you're a singer, you sing... and that's that." —CL

THE BALLAD OF EL GOODO: Don't point a finger at Alex Chilton for attempting to "bow out of his Nov. 16th Lingerie gig," as our own bad boy, S.L. Duff, stated in his Nov. 25th Club Data column. He did indeed have a Bay Area

everywhere about the entirely welcome recent rash of boxed album sets from such entities as Dylan, Muddy Waters, Atlantic Records, Sinatra, Queen, and Tangerine Dream—we'll call it the coffee table record phenomenon. All you need to enjoy these sets is a spartan stereo set-up. But Elvis Costello devotees—a rabid bunch indeed—need ALL the new hardware to fully appreciate the various versions of the new *Elvis Costello—The Man* best-of set. It goes something like this: the Columbia LP, which contains a

generous 16 cuts on a single disc, is actually a variation of the original Demon U.K. album, whose 16 cuts include six that are not on the Columbia version (the audiocassettes are identical to the records). The CD version of the album has 19 tracks, making it easily the most bountiful rock CD in existence (we've been trying to find one for weeks!). But the ultimate variation on the set is the videocassette (in stereo, of course), which contains 22 songs, visuals, and optimum sonic values. To fully appreciate Elvis, then, you'll need a turntable, cassette deck (to dub everything), compact disc player, and a Beta Hi-Fi unit. Aren't the Eighties complicated?!

FROM SMALL THINGS, BABY... *Billboard* magazine's editors thought so much of a Feedback letter written by Orange County-based manager Mike Jacobs (it appeared in our October 14th ish under the heading "A or R: Assets or Roadblocks") that they commissioned him to write a full-blown commentary for the November 30th issue of that publication. Anything else we can do for ya, big fellas?



BE IT LET: What Is This, the L.A. players' band that's semi-famous for its backwards song titles ("My Mind Have Still I"), has a new five-cut EP, *3 Out of 5 Live*, out on MCA. You may have already deduced that three of the five songs are live performances; the other two are from *What Is This*, the band's Todd Rundgren-produced '85 LP. Expect a full-length album from the trio on MCA sometime in '86. Meanwhile, here's the Kafkaesque cover photo from the EP. Get back, boys.

HOT FOR TEACHER: With more and more demand being put on them for contemporary music industry classes, both UCLA Extension and USC are responding with a varied selection of new, creative courses for the coming school semester. New at the UCLA Extension are two courses being taught by K.A. Parker, staff writer for Motown's Stone Diamond Music. "Contemporary Lyric Writing" and "Songwriters Workshop" will both begin the

week of January 20th. For those with the technical touch, there is "Recording Engineering Practice," "Recording Engineering Studio Operation and Maintenance," "Record Production," "Perspective on Video Music 1986," and "Multitrack Editing for Audio Recording." All of these classes are being offered as part of UCLA's Professional Designation in Recording Engineering. Composers who want to brush up on their film scoring can take advantage of five courses in instrumentation, harmony, conducting, music preparation, and the recording of dramatic music cues. Call UCLA at (213) 825-9064 for more info. . . . Meanwhile, across town, the USC School of Music is offering "Composition for the Music Industry," which will utilize the new Steven Spielberg state-of-the-art music scoring stage. This particular program will be limited to only 20 students, so call today. The number is (213) 743-2741. . . . Additionally, the Grove School of Music is starting full-time classes in the craft and business of songwriting beginning on Jan. 13th. On-site demo studios will be made available to full-time songwriting students, who will get

the opportunity to record one of their original tunes. . . . And while we're on the subject of songwriters, the Songwriters Guild Ask-A-Pro Series will meet once again on January 8th, when the topic of the evening will be "Life After Winning Song Contests." This two-hour music seminar is held the first Wednesday of every month, and reservations are required.

I BEG YOUR PARTON: Not that she would have done any hard time, but a million-dollar lawsuit is nothing to sneeze at—even if you're Dolly Parton. Having been charged with songnapping by amateur songwriters Neil and Jan Goldberg, an eight-member jury found Dolly Parton "not guilty" of stealing parts of a song originally entitled "Money World" as written by the Goldbergs. The couple had charged that Parton lifted the melody of their chorus as well as some of the other lyrics. "I guess it's open season on little songwriters," commented Mr. Goldberg after the verdict was handed in.

The trial lasted some ten days, although it took the jury less than a half-hour to reach their decision. I don't think it was visions of *sugar plums* dancing through their heads!

ALL JOIN IN: Under the heading of " 'tis better to give than to receive," comes word from the Big Apple that Radio City Music Hall and Chevrolet, Inc., in a joint effort, will be staging Drive Aid, a benefit to benefit those who have not yet benefitted from the original Live Aid. Said concert will be held on February 25th, although, as of this writing, no artists have been announced. . . .

ERRATUM: In Issue 24, we printed an incorrect caption under a picture of Danny Tarsha in his Primetrack Studio. The caption mentioned a Soundcraft Board, when in fact the board is a 32-channel fully automated Soundworkshop unit.

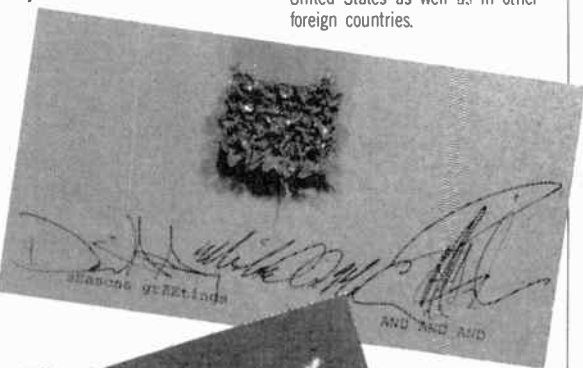
A CHRISTMAS CLASSIC of the vinyl variety was released this yuletide, and you should get it before you take your tree down. It's NRBQ's *Christmas Wish*, an eight-track, 45 rpm LP that times out to about ten minutes total—but what a ten minutes! You've never heard "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" or "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" until you've experienced them rendered in the NRBQ manner. The album makes a perfect companion piece for *She Sings, They Play*, the more conventional (but only in a relative sense) LP the band has cut with country thrush Skeeter Davis, one highlight of which is a 4/4 version of "Someday My Prince Will Come," performed in the manner of vintage Les Paul & Mary Ford. Pop music doesn't get much more sublime than these two endearing discs. Purchase them forthwith. ▼

NRBQ CHRISTMAS WISH



HERE COMES THE SUNN: Fender Musical Instruments president Bill Schultz let it be known that Fender has signed an agreement to purchase "certain assets" of Sunn Electronics, the company that manufactures amplifiers, lighting, and sound systems. Fender, purchased from CBS last year, now includes brand names such as Rogers, Rhodes, Chroma, and Squier, in addition to Sunn. . . . In other business-related news, Kevin Kent has opened the doors to his new K-Muse, Inc., a new hi-tech musical instrument company headquartered in Tarzana. The company will emphasize state-of-the-art music product designs and will also market hi-tech musical instruments and software.

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE GHOULY . . . at least that's the inference we've drawn from Metal Blade Records' unique approach to season's greetings (shown). Thanks, gang—likewise, we're sure. And while we're on the subject, we'd be remiss if we didn't show you these 3-D mailings from Rob Weiss and And And And, as well as reproducing the world's first CD Xmas card, commissioned by Chrysalis Records. Compact discs make terrific tree ornaments, by the way. ▼



DIGITAL VEGGIEBURGER: Did you know that British synth ace Howard Jones is a dedicated vegetarian, as are many of his 34-person crew? To cater their meals, Jones has brought over two vegetarian cooks from Britain. Jill Roarty, head cook in charge, boasts that she doesn't repeat any recipe twice on the eight-week-long tour, proving that vegetarian food can be interesting and varied. She is also such a perfectionist that she insists on using her own oven, which she had flown over from the U.K. especially for the occasion. . . . Say, Howie, pass the Spike, wouldja?

ALL THAT JAZZ: Band Aid, USA for Africa, Live Aid, Farm Aid, Artists United Against Apartheid, and now the jazz community's answer to it all: Jazz Aid—From the Heart '86. Set to kick off on February 13th at the Forum, this, according to organizer Tani Jones, will be "the largest Jazz concert ever staged." Artists already signed to appear include Dizzy Gillespie, Manhattan Transfer, Chuck Mangione, and Sarah Vaughan. Plans also include a live album of the concert, a television special, and a Jazz Aid video. Funds raised by Jazz Aid will go to feed the hungry in the United States as well as in other foreign countries.

MORE 1985 MOVERS & SHAKERS

	LPS	Singles	Rock/Pop	Soundtrack	Concert	TV Show	PEOPLE Man/Woman
BETSY ALEXANDER P.R.	None Do Re Mi <i>Domestic Harmony</i> INXS <i>Listen Like Thieves</i>	Long Ryders "Looking for Lewis & Clark" Do Re Mi "Man Overboard" Sting "Fortress Around Your Heart"	Dire Straits "Money for Nothing"	Paris, Texas	Live Aid	<i>The Equalizer</i>	Bono Vix None
DAVID BRYANT Ardavan Music	Tears for Fears <i>Big Chair</i> Bryan Adams <i>Reckless</i> Wham <i>Make It Big</i>	Foreigner "I Wanna Know What Love Is" Wham "Careless Whisper" Bryan Adams "Heaven"	A-Ha "Take on Me"	<i>Beverly Hills Cop</i>	Bruce Springsteen	<i>The Cosby Show</i>	Bob Geldof None
STEVE JENKINS Westwood One	Sting <i>Blue Turtles</i> R.E.M. <i>Fables of the Reconstruction</i> Eurythmics <i>Be Yourself Tonight</i>	Tom Petty "Don't Come Around Here No More" Paul Young "Everytime You Go Away" Elton John/Millie Jackson "Act of War"	None	None	None	<i>Nature</i>	Magic Johnson Kate Richards
CINDI PETERS MCA & R	Sting <i>Blue Turtles</i> Phil Collins <i>No Jacket Required</i> Waterboys <i>This is the Sea</i>	Sting "Fortress Around Your Heart" Simple Minds "Alive & Kicking" U2 "Bad"	David Bowie/Mick Jagger "Dancing in the Streets"	<i>Weird Science</i>	Live Aid	<i>The Cosby Show</i>	Bob Geldof Tina Turner
DAN PINE PolyGram Publicity	Springsteen <i>Born in the U.S.A.</i> Newly finished <i>Shubert's 7th Symphony</i> John Cougar "Scarecrow"	USA for Africa "We Are the World" Sade "Smooth Operator" Tears for Fears "Everybody Wants to Rule the World"	A-Ha "Take on Me"	<i>Chorus Line</i>	Kool & the Gang	<i>St. Elsewhere</i>	Desmond Tutu Helen Caldicott, M.D.
MITCHELL SCHNEIDER Music Division Dir. Michael Levine P.R.	Nick Lowe <i>Sixteen All-Time Loves</i> Dream Academy <i>Dream Academy</i> Pale Fountains <i>Across the Kitchen Table</i>	Aretha Franklin "Freeway of Love" Sheena Easton "Sugar Walls" Lloyd Cole & the Commotions "Brand New Friend"	Dream Academy "This World"		Pandoras at the On Klub	<i>The Donna Reed Show</i> Nickelodeon	Morrissey Angelyne
MURIEL TUVYENS Promotion Coordinator, Motown	Stevie Wonder <i>In Square Circle</i> Debarge <i>Rhythm of the Night</i> Mary Jane Girls <i>Only For You</i>	Debarge "Rhythm of the Night" Lionel Richie "Say You Say Me" Commodores "Night Shift"	Dire Straits "Money for Nothing"	<i>Beverly Hills Cop</i>	Smokey Robinson at Universal	<i>Motown Returns to the Apollo</i>	Stevie Wonder Annie Lennox
KAREN GLAUBER Nat'l Director of College Promotion/A&R	Nikki Sudden & Dave Kusworth <i>Robespierre's Velvet Basement</i> Hoodoo Gurus <i>Mars Needs Guitars</i> Robyn Hitchcock <i>Fegmania</i>	Robyn Hitchcock "Heaven" Wooden Tops "Move Me" Simple Minds "Don't You (Forget About Me)"	Tom Petty "Don't Come Around Here No More"	<i>Return of the Living Dead</i>	Robyn Hitchcock at Irving Plaza	<i>Star Search</i>	Robyn Hitchcock Madonna

Todd Everett's Top Ten Concerts of 1985

Freelancer (and occasional MC contributor) Everett reviews numerous concerts for the Los Angeles Herald Examiner.

1. Fats Domino at Universal: Fats' long-awaited return to the Los Angeles concert stage was, if anything, even more thrilling than could be reasonably expected. Fronting a booting New Orleans band led by Dave Bartholomew, Domino sang and played a huge number of hits, as well as goodies you'd never expect him to remember. Let alone play. Like "(I Can't Go On) Rosalie." For an old fogey like me, this was absolutely The Concert of the Year in a year filled with good music.

2. Prince at the Forum: I'm still trying to figure out what it all meant, other than a synthesis of black pop music styles of the last 35 years. But isn't that enough?

3. Tom Petty at the Wiltern: Taping his just-released live album, Petty and the band burned. I've never been a hardcore fan, but this show made me a believer.

4. Dire Straits at the Greek: Knopfler's best band yet, with the same instrumental lineup as the E-Streeters. It was one of only two shows all year that I went back for a second night.

5. Stanley Jordan/Bobby McFerrin at the Beverly: Two jazzers who started as street performers, each of whom can and does still carry a show without a single backing musician. They're both hopeless showoffs, but they make some fine music in the process.

Note: Bruce is as good as everybody says he is, of course, but there was so much other good music this year, I'll give him a rest.

6. Dan Fogelberg at Universal: The fewer backup musicians Fogelberg uses, the more I like him. This time around, he used an all-star newgrass ensemble, which was a refreshing compromise between solo and electric. This is the other show I went back to for a second time.

7. Perry Como at the Greek: He's in his '70s, and still sounds great. A smooth, super-professional showman. I think he's the best old-style pop singer working today. Also, he wrote me a thank-you letter after my interview with him was printed: That kind of attention to detail is another reason he can still fill the Greek.

8. Trouble in Paradise at the Palace: Organized by a team of semiprofessionals, bringing onstage a bunch of local yokels to benefit the downtown homeless, this was a wonderful celebration of the L.A. music scene. After the show, one of Jackson Browne's managers told me that, of all the benefits that Jackson has done, this was the smoothest.

9. Los Lobos at the Greek: The homeboys make good; their first big-time headlining show in town. Both band and audience were in top form for the occasion.

10. The Stylistics at the Beverly: Of course all of their old hits sounded wonderful. But you should've heard them work out on "Purple Rain!"

M&S TOP 20 TUNES OF 1985

Spock (ex-Columbia A&R)

- Golden Palominos: "Omaha"
- Cult: "She Sells Sanctuary"
- John Fogerty: "Old Man Down the Road"
- Yo: "White Eyes"
- Eieio: "Go West"
- Duran Duran: "View to a Kill"
- Tonny Keene: "Back to Zero Now"
- Pookah Makes 3: "Take It Back"
- Replacements: "Bastards of Young"
- Wall of Voodoo: "Far Side of Crazy"
- Charlie Sexton: "Beats So Lonely"
- X: "Round My Heart"
- Jules Shear: "Here She Comes"
- Sting: "Fortress Around Your Heart"
- Cruzados: "Rising Sun"
- Katrina & the Waves: "Do You Want Crying?"
- Paul Young: "I'm Gonna Tear Your Playhouse Down"

Welcome to the 2nd Annual M&S Leftovers spread, composed of poll responses that either came in too late or simply didn't fit our year-end issue. This material should be read while eating a turkey sandwich with cranberry sauce. So scarf and scrutinize to your heart's content....

Band	Video Director/ Record Producer	Executive	Underrated Artist	Gym, Workout, or Sneaker	Restaurant or Ethnic Food	Hip Store or Shopping Area	Leisure/Time Activity
ZZ Top	Tim Newman Ashley Howe	Dave Robinson Jeff Ayeroff	Chris Collister	Careful feedings Ballet exercises	El Morocco & Edo	3D Bed & Bath	Cooking Baking
Dire Straits	Steve Barron Bob Clearmountain	Ken Kragen	Katrina & the Waves Freddie Jackson	Nike shoes	Orleans/Cajun	My girlfriend's closet	Daydreaming of flying to Mars for my first concert appearance
R.E.M.	None Dave Stewart	None	Luther Vandross	None or running	El Choco Green Corn Tamales	Anywhere but Metrose	Golf
Simple Minds	Godley & Creme Keith Forsey	Steve Moir Thom Trumbo	Todd Rundgren	Jack LaLanne Nautilus equipment	Sushi at Domo's	Bloomingdale's	Sleeping
E Street Band (with Boss)	None None	Ken Kragen	Pia Zadora	Jogging by SF Valley wash	El Rancho in Sherman Oaks	None	Video roulette
Pale Frontains	Godley & Creme Eno	Danny Goldberg	Angelyne	Disco aerobics at Matrix One	Kelbo's	Pic 'N Save	Reading the <i>World Weekly</i> news
Debarge	None Rick Jartes	Michael Ressler	Duke Jupiter	Reebok	St Germaine	None	None
Simple Minds	Zbigniew Rybczynski Bob Clearmountain	Fred Bestal	Hoodoo Gurus	No health club, mental conditioning only, white Pro Veds	Thai food	Pier Platters in Hoboken, NJ	Searching for non-Yuppie compact discs, reading Jim Thompson books, watching <i>Dating Game</i> reruns

Jeff Beck: "Ambitious"
Gene Loves Jezabel: "Always a
Flame"
Redd Kross: "Legend"

Prairie Prince (Tubes)

ABC: "So Hip It Hurts"
Todd Rundgren: "Pretending to
Care"
Marvin Gaye: "Sexual Healing"
John Fogerty: "Mr. Greed"
Chris Isaak: "Western Stars"
Bill Spooner: "Something in My
Eye"
Thomas Dolby: "Hyperactive"
Tubes: "Eyes"
George Duke: "Amnesia"
Bryan Ferry: "Slave to Love"
Cameo: "Single Life"
Power Station: "Some Like It Hot"
ZZ Top: "Sleeping Bag"
Whitney Houston: "Savin' All My
Love for You"
Firm: "Radioactive"
Sting: "Fortress Around Your
Heart"
from *West Side Story*: "Something
Coming"

Kool & the Gang: "Misled"
Jan Hammer: "Miami Vice"

Sharon Sabbag (MCA)

Cult: "She Sells Sanctuary"
Simple Minds: "Don't You (Forget
About Me)"
Charlie Sexton: "Hold Me"
David Bowie/Mick Jagger: "Dancing
in the Streets"
Waterboys: "Be My Enemy"
Wall of Voodoo: "This Business of
Love"
Damned: "Street of Dreams"
Divinyls: "Pleasure & Pain"
Tom Petty: "Rebels"
Lone Justice: "You Are the Light"
Bryan Adams: "Heaven"
X: "Burning House of Love"
Cure: "In Between Days"
Bryan Ferry: *Boys & Girls*
Big Audio Dynamite: "Bottom Line"
Psychedelic Furs: "Into You Like a
Train"
Lords of the New Church: "Method
to My Madness"
Rolling Stones: *Exile on Main Street*
Broken Homes: "Steeltown"

Tina Turner: "Better Be Good to
Me"

Russell Scott Ziecker (Chrysalis)

Divinyls: "Pleasure & Pain"
Stranglers: "No Mercy"
X: "Burning House of Love"
Eurythmics: "Would I Lie to You"
Paul Hardcastle: "19"
R.E.M.: "Can't Get There From
Here"
Joan Armatrading: "Temptation"
Dire Straits: "Money for Nothing"
Jeff Beck: "People Get Ready"
Sting: "Fortress Around My Heart"
'til tuesday: "Voices Carry"
Tears for Fears: "Everybody Wants
to Rule the World"
Midnight Oil: "Kosciusko"
Simple Minds: "Don't You (Forget
About Me)"
Prince: "4 the Tears in Your Eyes"
INXS: "This Time"
New Order: "Perfect Kiss"
Bruce Springsteen: "Trapped"
Smiths: "How Soon Is Now"

Bud Scoppa (MC)

Stranglers: "Skin Deep"
Lloyd Cole: "Perfect Skin"
Taj Mahal: "Betty Ball's Blues"
Chris Isaak: "Dancin' "
Tom Petty: "Don't Come Around
Here No More"
X: "Watch the Sun Go Down"
Mellencamp: "Minutes to
Memories"
Nils Lofgren: "Flip Ya Flip"
China Crisis: "Black Man Ray"
Matt Bianco: "More Than I Can
Bear"
Tubes: "Feel It"
Robert Palmer: "Didn't Mean to
Turn You On"
Bryan Ferry: "Valentine"
Simply Red: "Holding Back the
Years"
Don Henley: "The Boys of
Summer"
Todd Rundgren: "Pretending to
Care"
TFF: "Everybody Wants...World"
Marti Jones: "Lonely Is"
Blue Nile: "Tinseltown in the Rain"
Cult: "Rain"

PREVIEW '86:

KEY ISSUES INVOLVE CENSORSHIP, COMMITMENT



HEAVY METTLE: Twisted Sister's Dee Snider (left) and Kiss' Gene Simmons have vowed to be true to their music regardless of censorship requirements.



GETTIN' MIGHTY CROWDED: The one-man, one-voice form of protest music forged by Bob Dylan during the Sixties has recently been reinvented as the sociopolitical supersession.

by Kenny Kerner

Most of us are still wiping the sleep from our eyes. It is a tranquil time. A time to dream. The party favors have all been swept away, but the difference between what is real and what is an illusion is still a bit unclear. It is a time of promises kept and promises broken. A time of no promises at all.

It's a new beginning. A clean slate for everyone. And although charts and sales and numbers in general are all turned back to zero, what can't be turned back are the issues themselves. They need to be addressed.

The results of the 2nd Annual Movers & Shakers Poll of industry notables proved con-

clusively that we in the music industry are concerned about issues more far-reaching than mere dollars and cents. We are concerned with our future, the future of others, and with making this a better, more efficient industry.

Censorship (rating and labeling records based on their lyrical content), the power of rock stars as a social influence, and the proper promotion of records surfaced as key issues for the new year.

The subject of censorship is one that we all seem to have inherited from last year. It is at once the most basic and most complex topic that the music industry has ever had to deal with. It is a question of balance.

As a quick refresher, let it be forever noted that the Parents' Music Resource Center (PMRC), the National PTA, and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) jointly announced a mutually agreeable method of labeling records and cassettes that contain "explicit lyrics."

Future releases from participating record companies (and as of this writing, some 80 percent of the major record companies are participating) will bear a sticker stating, "Explicit Lyrics—Parental Advisory" whenever the lyrical content is judged to reflect "explicit sex, violence, vulgarity, or substance abuse." Because of space limitations, cassettes will carry the warning: "See LP For Lyrics."

The feelings voiced in the M&S Poll were strong and clear: "Censorship of any kind is not good." "Don't compromise the First Amendment." Amen.

Censorship should start and end in the home. It is the duty of each and every parent to be able to censor his child without reaching out to censor an entire industry that provides both children and adults with entertainment.

What we have here basically is the *few* claiming that they know what is best for the *many*. The answer is quite simple: If you don't like it, then you don't buy it! But *don't you dare try and take it away from everyone else!*

Rating the records, much like the MPAA ratings for films, is going to make it even easier for kids to get their collective hands on albums with "suggestive lyrical content." Now, they will be clearly marked. Just look for the sticker. What could be easier?

Other feelings that came across quite strongly in the poll indicated that many readers still see performers as having the dual role of rock star and social spokesperson. The caution here, as one industry veteran pointed out, is to "remain aware of our power to influence."

What started simply enough as a one-man, one-voice movement with the likes of Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, et al soon came to a head when the witty Mr. Lennon proclaimed the Beatles to be "bigger than Christ" on national television. Naturally, John meant that the Fab Four were really more popular—but the damage had been done. The stage was set.

No more were rock stars mere musicians. They'd become poets. Politicians. Profiteers. Fortune tellers. Merchandising tools. The Beatles. The Byrds. The Doors. The psychedelic movement. The true establishment of musicians as social commentators.

With the emergence of Band Aid, USA for Africa, Farm Aid, and Artists United Against Apartheid, it's become clear that the power to influence is now stronger and more visible than ever before in our multimedia society. Gone are the days when one man stood, guitar in hand, and tried to make his voice heard above the masses. The courageous few of the Sixties, the theory of one man, once voice, has given way to what has become a sociopolitical supersession.

The trend that began in 1985 is likely to continue. A cause. A concert. A video. A single. An album. It's almost like Planned Protesting. And come this spring. . . Hands Across America.

What we tend to forget is that rock stars are people, too. They are also guaranteed the freedom to speak their minds. The only difference is that more people are listening. And as our readers pointed out, though they have the power, let them never forget the responsibility that comes with it.

Although most readers were concerned with social affairs on both a national and international level, there was also great concern for issues within the industry. Foremost and everpresent was the hope that the industry would finally somehow be able to come up with an effective plan to regulate the number of releases so that they could be properly promoted across the country.

This is by no means a new concern. It has for years kept many a recording artist and promotion man from getting a good night's sleep. Why on earth would a record company release six or seven albums during the same week when they know in advance that they don't have the manpower, the time, or the money to promote more than two or three of them?

You get all kinds of excuses. "We had to release the album because it's in his contract." Or, perhaps the most popular of all: "Even if the album doesn't happen, it'll build a strong foundation for the next one." Naturally, the next one never comes out because the first one didn't happen because too many albums were released to begin with! And we all go 'round and 'round.

C'mon, fellas. This isn't the first time you're hearing about the problem. Let's act. Let's start thinking about it. Now, everyone seems

to be concerned—both industry vets and consumers. It's time to take this off of the back burner and start dealing with it. It won't go away.

With so many marketing tools now available to recording artists, there is concern as to what medium can best be used to break a new act, and to generate greater sales and popularity for established groups.

HOPE FOR '86:

"To find a store in N.Y.C. that sells black 505 cotton Levi's. Seriously, I hope to see a little less 'cluelessness' in the 'biz' and less elitism in college radio."

—Karen Glauber, A&M's college promo director, in '85 Movers & Shakers Poll

It wasn't too long ago that the only criterion for success was a twelve-inch piece of black vinyl. A group huddled around an open microphone and did what they knew best. The results of their efforts were recorded and mixed simultaneously, and the term "direct-to-disk" was born.

We are now well into the new age of recording and marketing, and which direction an artist emphasizes (albums, singles, videos, soundtracks) can often determine the degree of success achieved. Is direct-to-disk becoming direct-to-video?

The Movers & Shakers Poll suggested that listeners are slowly but surely coming around to the idea of the compact disc. So much so that the demand now seems to be greater than the supply in many areas. Look for a big boom in CD's in '86.

To carry the multimedia thought even further, Pete Townshend has suggested that recording artists begin thinking along the lines of making a video of an entire album rather than of a particular song. Every picture tells a story, if you will. Townshend's *White City* album/videofilm puts his movie where his mouth is.

The new year will bring us a new album from the Rolling Stones, along with the inevitable talk of a U.S. tour. There are already rumors of a Led Zeppelin reunion. And what about the current soundtrack explosion? Will it continue?

Can Wham make it bigger? Will Cyndi Lauper ever release a new album, or is she content to keep fooling around with Hulk Hogan and Roddy Piper? How can we coerce Don and Glenn into putting the Eagles back together for one last album? Will we ever get two LPs a year out of John Fogerty?

What will it take to get Sting to stop making movies? Can the Los Angeles club scene survive another year? Will the Cult become the Next Big Thing?

All we are certain of is that we have a lot more questions than answers. And as long as it stays that way, we will continue to learn and grow. And that, ladies and gentlemen, is more than we can say about most other industries. ■

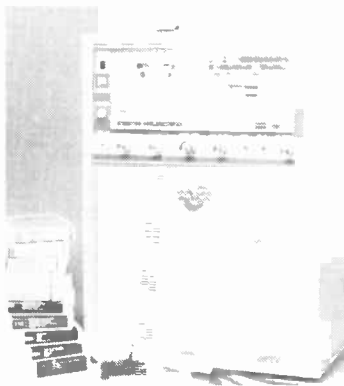
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The Rebirth of British Soul Singing

The old saying that a prophet is without honor in his own country seems to be the rule of thumb when applied to American popular music and its appendages in radio and record companies. Every revival, rediscovery, or refinement of musical forms indigenous to the U.S. appears to emanate from the shores of the British Isles. Paul Young's emergence in 1985 as a prime contender for the mantle of premier white R&B artist of the Eighties is but the latest case of "you beat me to the punch" on the part of our cousins in the United Kingdom.

Since the beginning of the Seventies, when David Bowie burst on the scene, the British vocalists who have been most successful on the charts have been decidedly English, both in accent and attitude, while still utilizing R&B instrumental influences. By that time, the Golden Age of British Soul, which was centered in the mid-to-late Sixties, was already on the wane. But it had given singers like Stevie Nicks, Rod Stewart, Van Morrison, Joe Cocker, Paul Jones (of Manfred Mann), and Frankie Miller a chance to define their styles with clear-cut references to Ray Charles and Sam Cooke, as well as various Motown and Stax stars. Vocalists who gained American popularity in the mid-Seventies—Paul Rodgers, Graham Parker, and Robert Palmer, for example—began to discard or de-emphasize these early influences in search of other (not necessarily greener) pastures. Case in point: Rodgers, late of the delectably understated and underrated Free, lost himself to the AOR bombast of Bad Company, never quite coming to grips with his glorious potential. By the late Seventies, the punks had succeeded in effectively drowning out—but by no means killing—the British soul tradition. Now, at last, Brit R&B is coming through loud and clear once again.

The following companion pieces focus on two of Britain's most distinctive present-day rhythm & blues singers.
—B.C./B.S.

by Bud Scoppa

Picture this: Here's a handsome, highly skilled rock artist living in Bahamian splendor with his wife and two kids; his spread electronically decked out with a hi-tech recording studio and a satellite dish. Career-wise, he's totally free to record whatever and whenever he likes, knowing that the major label he's signed to will dutifully finance and release his work. Sounds enticing, eh? There's more: A casual, one-off project has resulted in album sales of three-million units, and despite the fame and fortune those numbers imply, the artist has *mixed feelings* about the whole thing ("I don't know if I'll ever live it down," he confides). That's the balmy upside of Robert Palmer's existence. The downside involves more amorphous aspects like the lack of widespread critical acknowledgment, relatively low visibility, and a certain disconnection from the real world. All in all, not a bad trade-off.

As a suave and worldly fellow (he doesn't put on clothes, he *dresses*) and a man of catholic tastes (ranging from classical Persian music to Nat King Cole and Otis Redding), Robert Palmer's work bears the distinct stamps of both erudition and *le funk* hot, rendering him a unique figure in the pop world. He simply can't be pegged stylistically, although his vocal prowess, penchant for metaphors, and percolating rhythms are rooted in classic rhythm & blues. His efforts, Palmer claims, are underpinned by the desire to "re-illuminate tradition" at a time of its pervasive dilution.

Adding to his soulful singularity is Palmer's willingness to seek and subsequently tackle any outside song that intrigues him; he's an interpretive singer in the era of the self-contained performer. Take his new LP, *Riptide*, for example: The title track is a 50-year-old crooner's chestnut, sung in the traditional manner, while the album's most captivating performance is an inverted reading of "I Didn't Mean to Turn You On," a contempo dance tune Palmer first heard on New York's WBLS.

ROBERT PALMER: Some Guys Have All the Luck



"Ideally, when you're singing, you're not thinking. If you're thinking, you're not singing."

"The idea of that was role reversal," the singer explains between spoonfuls of *gazpacho* on the balcony of his suite at the Hotel Bel Age. "It was originally sung by a teenage girl named Cherrille. [Her approach was,] 'I know you expected a one-night stand, but I didn't mean to turn you on.' The girl is overtly sexy, ripe, you know? I thought, 'Oh, no—it's like Olivia Newton-John on 'Let's Get Physical.' Totally nuts to me. So I thought, 'What if this *middle-aged man* sings this song?' What a laugh. Tootsie. What I enjoyed about the concept of doing it was that it would be wry, whereas, when the girl sings it, it's... *disgusting*." It takes a nimble sensibility to locate inspiration within derision.

Even Palmer's own songs tend to come from far-away places, to hear him tell it: "Addicted to Love." I think, is the best thing I've ever done. And you know what's particularly strong about it for me is that—like most of the songs I write, one way or the other—this thing woke me up at three in the morning. Like when you're trying to bring a dream into consciousness to write it down, which I do quite often. I'm holding this thing in my head—I can hear it. I'm not really waking up, just going downstairs, pick up the guitar, switch on the cassette player—*dmm-dmm-dmm*. . . . Played it back the following morning—"Oh, caught that one." Then the whole thing is to get from that onto the record, and evoke what it was. And it's *better* than the dream—it's not often that that happens." The singer's stock-in-trade involves just these sorts of twists; he's a free spirit who simply makes it up as he goes along. But then, that tack may well be an indirect result of the time he entered the rock arena as a solo artist. After fronting the now-forgotten Alan Bown Set and Vinegar Joe (with Elkie Brooks) in the early Seventies, Palmer set out on his own in '74, midway between the heyday of British soul-rock singers like Paul Rodgers and Rod Stewart and the emergence of the punk minimalists. With no formal blueprint to follow, Palmer traveled to America to record with the Meters and members of Little Feat, a move as hip as it was unprecedented. The album, *Sneakin' Sally Through the Alley*, kicked off with a three-song, nine-and-a-half minute medley of Lowell George's "Sailin' Shoes," Palmer's own "Hey Julia," and the utterly electrifying, Allen Toussaint-penned title tune. This dazzling initial display of heady,

funkified rock & roll epitomizes the Palmer approach in general: blend a diverse array of outside songs and originals into a steamy bouillabaisse, unifying the stew with an indelible stylistic touch.

Palmer's wide-open approach may be the primary reason for his relatively low visibility. While his nine albums (not counting last year's Power Station project) contain numerous cuts that are at least semi-familiar to the average listener, they're so divergent in sound and origin that—even with Palmer's distinctive vocals—the listener simply never makes the connection. That's not so surprising when you A/B Palmer's near-hits: It's a big jump from the churning "Bad Case of Lovin' You" (written by rocker Moon Martin) to the technosoul of "You Are in My System" (penned and initially cut by New York's System). Palmer is not unaware of the problem he's created for himself:

"If I have one tune that makes a mark, like 'Every Kinda People' [written by former Free bassist Andy Fraser], then, next time I come up with a song, it's entirely different, and nobody knows that it's the same guy. Often, I'll do a concert, and somebody'll come along because they've just heard 'You Are in My System,' and they discover that they know a *dozen* of my songs. I love it—it's like revenge. I look at Rod Stewart, and I wonder what *he's* gonna do."

Not in a million years, eh, Robert? Nevertheless, in 1985, Palmer made what amounted to a dangerously mainstream career move—although he doesn't see it that way.

"[The Power Station] was an interesting discipline, on the one hand. And in retrospect, seeing as it sold three-million, sort of flattering—it makes me feel like a journeyman songwriter. It's very strange being given just yards of G Minor to turn into tunes. [But] I do nothing but collaborate anyway. The fact that I was part of a unit rather than heading it was a little holiday for me. I'm very pleased with the way it turned out. In fact, if it were my album—which it is, to all intents and purposes, in terms of the fact that I'm a singer on it—I would say that it's better than *Some People Can Do What They Like*." Then the telling aside: "Which isn't saying much."

For Palmer, near-anonymity remains synonymous with autonomy; consciously or not, he seems deter-

Continued on page 16

by Billy Cioffi

At 29, Paul Young is already a massive star in Europe. His debut LP, *No Parlez*, sold triple platinum, and his rangy (he's six-foot-two) good looks have catapulted him to the dubious yet monetarily enriching distinction of Pop Idol. While his first American release peaked on the *Billboard* charts at number 119, the record caused some controversy among the critics, who seem to be split in their perception of Young's vocal artistry. Some, myself included, found Young's masterful blend of emotion and technique, coupled with inventive arrangements of old and contemporary outside material, to be inspired—the next logical step, if you will, in combining traditional R&B performance energy with modern aural excitement. Others dismissed him as just another pretty face, with decent pipes and no particular point of view.

In choosing outside material, Young, his band-leader/pianist Ian Kewley, and producer Laurie Latham have shown a canny ability to dig deep into a song and bring out new dimensions in the material. A case in point is his reworking "Love Will Tear Us Apart," the signature song of post-punk gloomers Joy Division. Young explains how he did it:

"We ended up doing it by putting ourselves in the position of being the publisher, and I pretended I was going to send it to the Four Tops; and *that* was the idea—because it's got that 'Reach Out (I'll Be There)' drum part."

Young also has strong feelings about the balance he's maintained between outside material and his own songs:

"I don't think I write singles. Which is why so many of our singles are covers. I want to search out and find great songs; I want to be the kind of artist who can go out and choose quality songs, in the same way Rod Stewart did with Tim Hardin's 'Reason to Believe.' What a beautiful song! There are so many areas to look in rather than confining it to your own writing. It's an old-fashioned attitude and people think I'm old-fashioned by covering other people's tunes, but it's really the other way around. People have been writing and covering their own tunes for 20 years now and it's about time they changed and looked around.

"It's because [the artists] feel they're going to be manipulated and don't trust anybody. It's taken me a long time to get some success because it's taken me time to find people I can live with and trust. Now I just have to concentrate on getting *my* bit right. I know there are better producers or songwriters, by trade, than I am. In the end, what I have to do is oversee it, 'cause it's *my* career."

In rearranging an obscure Marvin Gaye chestnut, "Wherever I Lay My Hat Is Home," Young and company did just the opposite of the Joy Division selection, changing the song's "love 'em and leave 'em" attitude to one of implied isolation through the use of icy synthesizers and bass sounds. Reinforcing this tack, he discards the intent of Gaye's original performance, opting for a Sam Cooke-type of reading. This gives the song a soulful chromium sheen seldom heard in contemporary rhythmic ballads.

Young's greatest commercial success, so far, has been his Number One single, "Every Time You Go Away" (from his second LP, *The Secret of Association*), written by Daryl Hall, arguably America's best white R&B singer. This year, Top 40 radio was inundated by this lilting ballad, which perfectly synthesized commerciality, emotion, and production inventiveness by combining Young's evocative performance with an electric sitar and a beautiful male chorus.

On his most recent tour, Young featured a trio of black male background singers, an unusual if not courageous move.

"The girls were great," says the singer (referring to his previous background duo, the Fabulous Wealthy Young Tarts), "but I wanted to work with male singers because I didn't do it on the first album and I had never worked or spent any time with *male* vocal harmony.

PAUL YOUNG: Vocal Virtuoso Becomes Rock Idol



"I don't think I write singles. Which is why so many of our singles are covers."

"When they joined with me," he continues, "they re-introduced me to my love of singing, because, to a certain extent, I had forgotten *why* I got in the business. Why I started was for the *release* of being able to sing—you can let things out of yourself. I rediscovered that when I got together with the guys and we started warming up backstage. This incredible sound came out without having to pick up instruments; we really got a buzz off that. We always mess around with old songs backstage, and though we've never taken the time to tighten things down, one or two songs came out of it that we do onstage now—'Da Doo Ron Ron' and 'Cupid.'"

Young is philosophical about the tendency of some critics to dismiss him as a teen idol:

"I particularly had to deal with it in Germany. I was taking the band over the first couple of times, and people asked [if I felt] bad about being taken for a teen idol, because I wasn't [being] taken seriously, and I said I felt I *could* be taken seriously, and just because I get labeled, they don't bother listening, and that's *their* fault. It's a terrible thing, and I'm guilty of it, too. At times, I'll make my own opinion of things just be reading about it and not by listening to it, and I make mistakes; so I discover people later than I should have. I only recently got into Luther Vandross when I should have gotten into him a long time ago."

As to why the English have produced so many outstanding blue-eyed soul singers, literally revitalizing our own concept of R&B, Young replies:

"That's interesting, because people always make a big deal out of how the English people love R&B. I think it has to do with the idea of the class system in England. All the people who picked up on R&B were the working class people. You get certain similarities between that and American black people and where their music originates. The working class in England took R&B and made it their own. That's why you have people like Frankie Miller, who's such a *great* R&B singer."

Young's background seems to offer proof for his theories. Born into a blue collar family in the city of Luton, he left school at 16 and got an apprenticeship at the Vauxhall auto plant where his father worked (shades of Motown). His first recorded work was in the rock group Streetband, who had a minor English hit in the mid-Seventies. Following that

group's dissolution, Young spend the next several years touring in a successful club band *cum* soul revue called the Q-tips. It was in this aggregation that he met keyboardist Ian Kewley, whose R&B roots perfectly complemented Young's own musical leanings. As a recording act, the Q-tips had much the same problem as L.A.'s Jack Mack & the Heart Attack or Billy & the Beaters: As a live act, they were tremendously popular, but they met with basic indifference from the recording companies. When the Q-tips went the way of all bands, CBS offered Young a solo deal—you know the rest.

The problem that seems to have dogged virtually *all* British R&B singers in the last decade has been inconsistency. From a purely artistic perspective, none—Young included—has yet made an album that is a solid combination of material and performance as definitive in its genre as, say, Aretha Franklin's *I Never Loved a Man*, or Dusty Springfield's *Dusty in Memphis*, or several of Dionne Warwick's early records. Once again, it could be a case of those female vocalists putting themselves in the hands of a Jerry Wexler or Burt Bacharach. Young's trust and respect for Kewley and his producer could make the difference, but that remains to be seen. In the meantime, Young is immersing himself in the past and looking toward the future.

"The big mistake these days is people's choice of songs. I think it's unfortunate, especially with black artists, that the only thing some people think they can do is disco and club-type music. A lot of songs are just plain banal. If only there was a return to *songs* again, like in the days of early Dusty Springfield and Dionne Warwick, when they just went out and chose the best songs and made a great *singing* album.

"I just went out and bought a whole ton of Frank Sinatra and Tony Bennett stuff," he reveals, "because I still haven't heard it. I want to hear great songs and great arrangements, and you don't get them as much anymore.

"I started late, coming from a small town. I never saw *anything* live until Slade when I was 15 or 16. I never saw many live acts at all. Everything I've ever picked up as regards performance has been through watching television. I only need to see and hear it once, because, if it is striking enough, it scars my brain." ■

PALMER



Robert Palmer
in photo by Kevin White for *Rolling Stone*

Continued from page 14

nined to remain just outside the beam of the spotlight. "If I make a record, I'm more interested in putting the music across than putting myself up-front as a personality. I'm at my most private onstage. My concentration is to make the notes come out of the mouth properly, and make the thing swing. And the fact that people are there is almost a distraction for me. Sometimes it works, especially on the last tour, because it was the first band I'd put together that I had a real confidence in. That I didn't have to constantly turn around and keep pullin' and pullin'. They were supportive, inventive, and creative, and yet they stayed within the context all the time. So they gave me a lot more room to... grin, occasionally."

Palmer may feel slightly ill-at-ease onstage (although, like Van Morrison, he makes his discomfort work for him), but that isn't what kept him off the Power Station tour last summer. "I was completely surprised when they decided to go out," he marvels. "I mean, how do you do a tour with only eight songs?" Palmer isn't about to find out. Besides, he had his own album to do, and the Power Station project had provided him with the final piece of the puzzle.

"I was looking for a producer, and as soon as I bumped into Bernard [Edwards, who produced *Power Station*], I knew the worth of what one was. In the sense of—having done all my homework—being a singer performing the songs; not switching hats all the time, busting people for arrangement, running back and forth, and everything else. So when John and Andy

went off to Paris for the James Bond thing with Duran Duran, I whisked Bernard Edwards and Tony Thompson down to Nassau, and I cut eight tracks for my new album.

"I'm not really too concerned about [Riptide's] accessibility," Palmer muses, "because I think patience is important. If the record feels good to make, and when it's finished you listen to it and are content with how it sounds, then it's successful. After that, it's the way the wind blows. I'm not about to change horses at this point. To a certain extent, the [Power Station] album reaffirmed my thinking that you just get on with it, and if it feels right, you can trust that.

"I've been busy exploring other fields, experimenting as a vocalist in an entirely selfish way—seeing what I can do with my voice. I worked with a 16-piece all-female horn band in New York, doing Billie Holiday material. Not Linda Ronstadt/Doris Day—the funky stuff. Then I got further into the Persian business—been studying that a lot. And then developing this super-funk business—a mixture of Miles Davis' *On the Corner* meets... 'Work to Make It Work,' something like that. Essentially, I've made enough material for like four albums. I've got a great system at home now, and I can do these things and stick them on the wall. I don't have to inflict it on the public.

"Having done that," Palmer continues, "it was a nice coincidence that this [Power Station] thing came up when it did, because otherwise I would've been floored by some of the attitudinal things I have to deal with. For instance, 'You're built like a car, you got a hubcap diamond star halo... That was a problem. 'Bang a Gong' was such an abstract thing to do. Ideally, when you're singing, you're not thinking. If you're thinking, you're not singing. Once you adjust your energy that you're gonna attach to the tune, it's like remaining in character with a part. And I tried this one way, and I thought, 'No way can I sing this like a soul thing—it's so STUPID!' And then, all of a sudden, I locked into this SPOT, and I can't really describe what it was, but the whole thing was, the

frame of mind that I had to devise to perform that tune was such a laugh—almost as if the chorus was a revenge against the verse! 'Am I really singin' this?'"

Palmer lights another Dunhill and knits his patrician brow. "I'm content enough," he reflects. "I have two children now, and soon they'll be looking at further education, so maybe because of that, my sales will improve. The wind blows first. And as soon as you start devising it, you can hear it in the grooves, and then you lose. I mean, pop music is disposable; it's supposed to be folk music—it's the tune that's in tune with the time. And that's how I like to stay in tune with myself. Otherwise, you end up trimming the same ground again, boring yourself, and—consequently—your audience."

Like Ian Fleming's Dr. No, Palmer launches his schemes while holed up in a technologically advanced island fortress. "I have a satellite dish—I receive 200 television stations. I keep correspondence with people in most major cities in the world, and receive tapes from them on a monthly basis—random radio selections, and tunes they've heard that they like. Perhaps that's why—because I collect music as a hobby—I'm so swamped with what's going on, like AHEAD, that when I bring out a record, it takes the listening public three years to actually figure out where I was coming from. Sometimes that's frustrating, but... /sings/ 'Some guys have all the luck...' as a case in point." (Palmer recorded the song in 1981, well before Rod Stewart cut his hit version.)

The urbane iconoclast has a more positive opinion about another interpretive singer, one who cut a memorable Palmer original a few years back:

"Have you heard Tina Turner's version of 'Johnny and Mary'? Killer. It doesn't have the, shall we say, 'ironic tenderness,' but then, I wouldn't describe that as being part of what she attempts, anyway. Isn't she a winner? 'River Deep, Mountain High'—PHEW!

"Somebody [at Arista] once asked me to write a bridge [for 'Johnny and Mary,' so that Melissa Manchester could record it]. I invented a euphemism for 'Fuck off.' I mean, really." ■

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VOICES IN THE CROWD: Breaking in as a Professional Singer



Photo by Lawrence Henry

Rusch: "You don't have to sound like sandpaper."

by Lawrence Henry

A young woman takes the stage in a small, dark club on L.A.'s West Side, under appalling conditions: bad sound, players unfamiliar with her tunes, and her car repossessed the night before. Meanwhile, on television, one of her colleagues in this business makes a debut co-starring in a sure-to-be-successful situation comedy. *Billboard's* singles chart lists a tune by yet another colleague as Number One in the nation.

A slight young man sits over coffee in his modest, sunny apartment in the Hollywood hills, speaking of his dream of making a good enough living so his wife won't have to work. Another member of this small, rather select group perches on her piano bench and talks fervently about students she has helped to overcome physical and emotional limitations. Still another has just seen an album carrying one of his tunes go Triple Platinum.

These are the singers of Los Angeles. Some read music, some don't. Some are professional players of musical instruments, too; some are not. They tend to know one another. They're making a living from their voices and their personalities in one of the toughest trades in the world.

By its nature, the work tends to divide itself into two parts: the studio and the stage. Studio work includes everything from album projects for major labels to no-pay demos and what one singer calls "scab jingles"—a one-time paycheck for a non-union television or radio commercial.

Before his current public success with the band Mr. Mister and "Broken Wings" (at press time, the nation's Number One single on *Billboard's* charts), Richard Page made a name for himself as a studio player and singer.

"I've done literally tons of sessions with various artists," Page says. His credits include

albums by Donna Summer, Al Jarreau, Rick Springfield, Kenny Loggins, Kenny Rogers, Diana Ross, and Julio Iglesias.

Like many others, Page credits his initial success in the studio scene to the friendships and connections he made while recording albums of his own—even if those albums were not necessarily successful in their own right.

"I had a record deal in the late Seventies," Page recalls, "with my partner, Steve George, who's in Mr. Mister, with a band called Pages. Jay Graydon produced one of those albums. He and David Foster were partners at that point. They both liked what Steve and I did, as far as our singing, and they started calling us to do background dates."

Then, "Burt Bacharach heard us, and he started calling us. Pretty soon Quincy Jones was calling us. It just really started to snowball . . ."

Arno Lucas, whose album and tour credits include Rickie Lee Jones, Bette Midler, and Randy Newman, tells a similar story.

"The start for me was being in a group on Warner Bros. for three records," Lucas says. "The group was called Crackin'. During the course of that, we met Michael Omartian, who produced two of our records. This was just before he started to hit. In the process, we made some very good connections . . ."

For Katey Sagal, who plays the continuing role of cynical, chain-smoking newspaper columnist Jo Tucker on Mary Tyler Moore's new CBS series, *Mary*, the process was similar.

"The album projects I've done," says Sagal, "have been pretty much through friends of mine who have become producers."

As a beginner, however, Sagal—who has worked with Bette Midler, Bob Dylan, and Etta James—took work where she could find it.

"I would call up songwriters—even ones I didn't know—and just offer my services—not be afraid to work for nothing. I did a lot of that. Then when the project comes through, and there's some money, they think about you."

Sagal's primary experience has been live, however, as a background singer, as a performer with her own band, and in the recent musical *The Beautiful Lady*, at the Mark Taper Forum. Sagal's audition for Bette Midler provides a vivid picture of a recurring ordeal—the "cattle-call":

"There were about 150 people," she remembers. "We worked on a big, huge soundstage, and you got to sing one song. Then they narrowed it down to 25. Then they narrowed it down to six. By the time you got to the six, you had to dance and sing, and just be generally wonderful."

Here again, personal connections made the difference.

"With Bob [Dylan], a friend of his got the job, and she got me the job," Sagal says. "And I brought her in for the Bette [Midler] audition."

Terri Garrison (formerly Theresa Tate; she has recently resumed using her maiden name) has toured with Hoyt Axton and Tanya Tucker. She credits her success as a background singer to two factors:

"What you've got is meat against metal. All they have to do is turn up to ten, and they can drown you out."

—Gloria Rusch

"They want someone who's accurate," Garrison says, "and fast. And real professional, with no nonsense. You learn tricks about that on the road—how you can be the most invisible as a backup singer, both getting on and off the bus and onstage."

Today's singers work under a variety of conditions, many of them, like touring, incredibly demanding. How important is technique in the formal sense—taking voice lessons?

Singer/actress Gloria Rusch, alone among the six singers interviewed here, studies and teaches regularly. She is one of several teachers participating in the establishment of the School of the Natural Voice, a *bel canto* venture. Rusch's credits—astonishing in a singer so young—include Duke Ellington, B.B. King, Judy Garland, Annie Ross, and Al Jarreau.

"[Voice teacher] David Kaufman was the one who got me to discover what I needed to know about the voice," Rusch says, "and got me doing the things I needed to do. Because my voice was practically gone. I had lost my middle range, and my top range was going. I stopped singing for a whole year."

Rusch emphasizes the difficulty of singing in a modern, amplified stage environment, especially on tour:

—Continued on next page—

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"You go to bed late, you get up late, you're on the tour bus, or you're flying from one airport to the next . . . and you've got to work, and the first thing that goes is the voice. . . . What you've got is meat against metal. And all they have to do is turn up to ten, and they can drown you out!"

With technical problems now behind her, Rusch stresses technique and communications, both in her own work, and in her students' performances and auditions.

"Anyone can have any type of voice, as long as they communicate," says Rusch. "The ones that communicate the best, however, are the ones who have a quality voice, that will last for years and years. . . . People with very good voices can sing commercial music. You don't have to sound like sandpaper."

For many singers, however, training comes "sort of after the fact," in the words of Joe Turano, lead singer for the band Zuma II, a veteran of television and jingle singing and album projects (Rickie Lee Jones, Bette Midler).

"Singing came naturally, and it wasn't really a problem," Turano recalls. "When . . . I lost my voice for the first time in my life, it forced me to re-examine things, and examine what tension could do to the voice, so I got some training. . . and it helped me to relax."

Arno Lucas, who laughs, "I've never studied, which is beyond me," stresses how much an experienced singer can learn from observation:

"I've paid close attention. The people who I love to watch, I really go and study. . . I listen to it all!"

Terri Garrison, a friend of Lucas', adds, "You pick up a lot. I remember picking up some stuff from [Jackson Browne backup singer] Rosemary Butler—yawning, and how that helps your technique. And Arno and I have had a lot of talks about singing and focusing and centering. So, you know, you learn. You learn in the streets."

Turano, Lucas, and Page are instrumentalists, too. But several years ago, Turano stopped working as a keyboard player because he felt it interfered with his singing career.

"A lot of people thought of me as just a keyboard player," he says, "and I had to kind of break through that. Plus everybody wanted a whole bank of synthesizers. Now, there are people who are surprised to find out that I play." Turano has resumed work on piano.



Photo by Darius Anthony

Page: "It just really started to snowball. . . ."

In Richard Page's view, "It all helps. My parents were both musicians. So I had most of the basics out of the way when I was a kid. Having played keyboards and bass and guitar for years, it certainly helped me with my singing."

Lucas, a percussionist, adds, "I think it's to my advantage [both to play and sing], because I'm able to play a lot of different types of music, and. . . get in touch with those formulas that make a certain type of music work. . . R&B, rock, heavy rock. I do country sessions. I did the last three Steve Goodman albums. From him to John Prine to Bette Midler to Rickie Lee Jones to the New Edition—that entails a lot of different formulas."

Formal technical skill, however—theoretical training, and the ability to read music—doesn't ultimately seem to make much difference in a singer's success.

"There are a lot of singers making a good living. . . who don't have a clue as to what notes are what," Richard Page says, echoing an often-heard opinion. "That's not going to hinder anybody. If you're a great singer, and you have something to offer. . . I don't think anybody's going to say, 'You can't do this

because you can't read!'"

In fact, if there's a single common characteristic of all successful singers, it is this: that they will not allow anyone to tell them they can't do something for any reason.

"Never let anything stop you," says Terri Garrison. "If you've got the desire, you'll figure it out—whatever you need to figure out to get where you want to go. It's all desire."

"I've always felt like I had no choice but to sing," Katey Sagal adds. "I don't really know how to do anything else." She laughs. "Now I guess I know how to act!"

Sagal also has an interesting perspective on the need to make connections:

"It's funny how when you're trying to meet people, you think that they don't want to meet you, but everybody's looking to meet people."

And, of meeting stars, Gloria Rusch adds, "They're just regular people."

Arno Lucas adds a final caution:

"Try and be ready for any opportunity. If you're playing or singing someplace, you never know who's there. Everything matters. And if you feel that way, then you will work hard, and nothing takes the place of hard work." ■

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Six L.A. Singers Talk About Successful Attitudes

Arno Lucas: "People don't want you walking in with your ass hanging on the ground. They would like you to come in and bring something. When I work with people, they feel very comfortable about having me around, and the working atmosphere is a very nice one."



Richard Page: "What you're trying to create is something that's fun, something that goes beyond work. It has to sound like it's entertainment, sound like it's something magical. . . . All the best studio players that I've met. . . . have great attitudes, and are easy to work with."

Gloria Rusch: "I want to be sung to. So many times you walk in to see a singer, and the body is standing there, but where's the singer? What's the point? You have to really be there."



Joe Turano: "The best advice was given to me by a vocal contractor. He said, 'For every style you can do fairly well, there's somebody else who can do it great. Do what you do the best you can, and devote yourself to that, and you'll stand out.'"



Katey Sagal: "I think 50 percent of it is getting along with people. If you're a really, really great singer, really talented, but nobody likes you as a person, they're not going to hire you, 'cause there're a lot of people who are nice people, and can sing good!"



Terri Garrison [formerly Theresa Tate]: "I remember doing a session with Arno, a jingle for a hardware store. It was eleven in the morning but we were both be-boppin' and happy. We did it real fast, and they loved it, and that's a real big part of it. Bring in some luhhv!"

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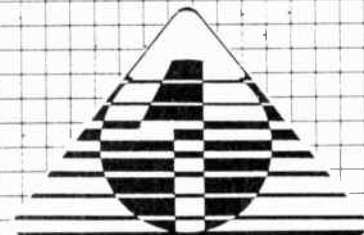
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Producer Profile

DAVID KERSHENBAUM: A Free Spirit From the Ivory Tower

by Carolyn Farris

Producer David Kershbaum is a technocratic enigma of sorts: He's a low-key musical maverick who's nevertheless spent a good part of his career running a major-label A&R department. Fittingly, Kershbaum is best known for his work with the adventurous Joe Jackson, whom he signed while doing A&R at A&M Records. The artists he's produced are a varied lot—Supertramp, Joan Baez, Ronnie Laws, Hoyt Axton, the Ozark Mountain Daredevils, Cat Stevens, Eddie Money. . . apparently this Kershbaum is a flexible fellow.

He first rose to the top of the charts as the producer of B.W. Stevenson's "My Maria" on RCA, which sent him to Nashville to work with Chet Atkins, then head of RCA's country division. In the last ten years, the producer has achieved international gold and platinum status with such albums as Baez's *Diamonds and Rust*, Stevens' *Izito*, and Jackson's *Look Sharp*, *I'm the Man*, and *Body and Soul*. Kershbaum's work on Jackson's *Night and Day* and Duran Duran's *U.S. debut album*, *Rio*, received Grammy nominations. He spent six years at A&M, the last three as the label's VP of A&R. He left in '83 to become an independent producer.

In the following interview, Kershbaum reflects on the distinct but entwined realms of A&R and record production.

MC: I understand it took almost a year to do Supertramp's *Brother Where You Bound*. What kind of pre-production was involved?

Kershbaum: The album was recorded in demo form at Rick Davies' house. Rick has a really fine studio. Then we rehearsed the band and started at Ocean Way around July of '84, and it was ready to go in March of the following year.

MC: On Joe Jackson's *Body and Soul*, the band played a lot of live dates before going into the studio. Was that your way of doing pre-production?

Kershbaum: Yeah, that was our way of rehearsing it out without being closed. We had enough to contend with the big room we found, so we didn't want to get into an arrangement thing. We felt like the band would have a lot more fire if they played it live and took that attitude into the studio.

MC: Although the actual time spent recording Joe

Jackson's *Body and Soul* was five weeks, the whole production took about a year.

Kershbaum: They started early because Joe likes to do a lot of scheming. The actual recording time went pretty quickly [because] we had already demoid the album out. On *Body and Soul*, we were looking for a live sound that didn't sound like a studio and also didn't sound like an arena. We ended up after a lot of searching in New York with a hall that was built around 1890. It had great ambience! We loved the sound of it, but we weren't sure whether we could control it. We brought in some equipment months before [recording] to make sure it would be okay. We ended up building our own control room several rooms down. That took a couple of weeks.

MC: You're on your fifth album with Joe. How does he usually prepare a record?

Kershbaum: Joe is particularly arrangement-oriented. He's classically trained and hears all the parts in his head. He's so prepared, it's like a dream. There's very little question about what's to be played. . . so it's just a matter of getting it on tape. Usually, there's a lot of experimentation with sounds.

MC: Give us some highlights on how you found and signed Joe Jackson.

Kershbaum: In the spring of '78, I was in England looking for talent and saw Elvis Costello. I fell in love with the whole feeling and character. I heard *My Aim Is True* and just went nuts. When I finally got a hold of his manager [Jake Riviera], he said, "You certainly have the qualifications, but what makes you think you can produce new music?" I was taken aback, 'cause I feel production is basically enhancement. I believe producers should be judged by their ability to bring out the best in someone and their technical ability. Then I thought, "Well, maybe he has a point. I should find something and do it." After four months of looking, in comes this publisher [Dai Davies] saying, "I think this is going to interest you." I thought, "Oh, boy, I hope this isn't going to be one of those nights." It was late on Friday, I was tired, it was rainy. Fortunately, he came in with the tape that had "Look Sharp," "Is She Really Going Out With Him?" and "Sunday Papers"! It was a very good weekend. Monday we made the deal and were in the studio very shortly after that. We recorded *Look Sharp* in about two weeks. It was easily the most exciting period in my life.

MC: It was refreshing buying that album.

Kershbaum: Thanks. Back then, it was so ahead,



Photo by Ken Sax

D.K. on Look Sharp: "It was easily the most exciting period in my life."

style-wise, over [what was happening] here Elvis Costello was just getting started. Blondie was breaking, the Police were coming into their own. It was a real exciting time. We got into buses and went from town to town, and watched it all break.

MC: You seem to have gone for acts that are noted for much more than their singles. Has your experience at RCA and A&M helped you to recognize an act's ability to sell albums?

Kershbaum: I haven't gone for [many] strictly singles acts, out of my own personal tastes. I'm not saying that either is right or wrong; I'm just magnetized by certain artists like Kids in the Kitchen [Sire] and other acts out of Australia; I look for a mood and an attitude. I'm regularly approached to do things that I know are going to be real important, successful records, and yet I don't have an emotional feeling for them. I know I'm not the one to present that and say so. I think A&M gave me a graduate-school view of what the record business is really like. I was really in the midst of what happens with records after making them. I saw what a record company is up against beyond the protected walls of the studio.

MC: How did the fact that there were about 70 artists on the roster affect you?

Kershbaum: I got to work with a lot of different kinds of artists and music. It gave me empathy for the other producers and what they were doing. Seeing similar ways that things get handled when the same type of problems came up gave me an invaluable overview.

MC: What's your feeling about Herb Alpert and Jerry Moss at A&M?



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Kershenbaum: I always make an attempt to visualize how [the track I'm producing] is going to sound on the radio, particularly in the mixing. Lately, I've found that by taking a compact disc into the studio, you can really play what you're doing up against everyone else in a very accurate form.

Kershenbaum: It's no accident that A&M is what it is. Herb still is sensitive to musicians, spots and picks people up early, and gives them a shot. Jerry is not only an astute businessman but has a desire to seek out the things that aren't so obvious yet make it commercial. Jerry was the one who went over to England and found artists like Cat Stevens, Human League, and other English talent. Really, they're both great guys to work with.

MC: How did A&M affect you creatively?

Kershenbaum: I gained more from working in A&R with so many other producers. It gave me a better overview of what I could achieve in the studio. I also learned where to find songs and [how to] match songs with artists. A&M also helped from the standpoint of being able to evaluate artists from a wider perspective. [Now,] I look at [an artist's] management and their record company's roster to see where this artist fits into their plans. That helps me pick things that make sense to begin with.

MC: After you left A&M, how did you find Duran Duran?

Kershenbaum: Through a friend, Rupert Perry, then VP of A&R at Capitol Records. He told me about a band that was doing well all over the world except here. They were really hot in England, and Rupert asked me if I'd hear the single and meet with the band when they came out to do the Greek.

MC: What was that single?

Kershenbaum: "Hungry Like a Wolf." So I [remixed] it and that led to us doing an EP and reworking the first side of the album.

MC: When you had to negotiate those projects as an independent producer, to what extent did your corporate business experience come into play?

Kershenbaum: There's certainly no question that in the number of negotiations I did on behalf of A&M I learned a lot about contracts. It helped me with my own contracts. The number of people at high levels I was exposed to was staggering. You don't lose those contacts because of the relationships that develop. Now, I can still understand sensitive situations that A&R is dealing with. There's a camaraderie among A&R people.

MC: What kind of advice would you give to new producers to help them get their first shot?

Kershenbaum: Being a writer and a producer can take a little doubt out of the record company executive's mind. Another way to do it is to find an artist. They want to see you perform in the role as a producer. It's easier if you take a record company something they already like that's original.

MC: You mean get your artist a deal?

Kershenbaum: Yeah, and say, "I'm part of the package."

MC: You don't have a Dave Kershenbaum "sound."

Kershenbaum: No. To me, it's not a matter of dropping someone into a concept where you do one thing

real well and everything sounds pretty much in that vein. That provides me with the flexibility to work with someone like Eddie Money who's himself [a producer] and just needs to be surrounded with the right elements. Then I can still turn around and do something totally different.

MC: What are your views on the multi-producer projects in R&B, pop, and country? Do you see a continuing trend?

Kershenbaum: I believe there are pluses and minuses. I'd prefer to work with an artist from top to bottom and conceptually, where we do the whole thing. There are times when a record company is looking for a lot of singles and what each producer can bring. So sometimes that situation is necessary. Writers are becoming producers, so it's good for them. Whoever comes up with the songs is going to do that project, particularly from the standpoint of singles.

MC: Doesn't that make it difficult for new songwriters to get their material through?

Kershenbaum: [Pauses] I think the great songs still get through. This trend is a real direct reflection of the cost involved in making records today. With promotion and marketing costs, record companies are afraid not to have three or four singles. I don't blame them for covering their bases. The whole idea is to come up with a better-sounding record. It'll probably continue on the pop and dance sides, where it's strictly singles they're after. I don't think we're going to see Supertramp or Dire Straits using five producers.

MC: Do you deliberately produce with airplay in mind?

Kershenbaum: I always make an attempt to visualize how it's going to sound on the radio, particularly in the mixing. Lately, I've found that by taking a compact disc into the studio, you can really play what you're doing up against everyone else in a very accurate form. You're really listening to other people's master tapes! On the radio, what happens is you hear

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one and you'll hear yours and you'll hear another one. I want to make sure when ours is played, the relative excitement level and size of the record is as good as it can be. I want to compare to see where we're at. There may be a little bit of different in top and bottom [on CD] here and there, but it's so slight that the clarity and size of the record can still be judged.
MC: Do you believe in cutting more tracks than you need?

Kershenbaum: It's necessary, unless the artist is like Joe Jackson, who writes with sequencing in mind... which is unbelievable. With most artists, we're not stringing together a few songs, we're trying to get a flow going, and that's why you usually need a few more songs. It's also good in terms of having more options in choosing singles.

MC: In most cases, how do you approach sequencing an album?

Kershenbaum: The first cut and last cut on each side are the pivotal cuts. They're not necessarily the single. I like the first cut to set the stage for what the side is going to be like. Then I choose the closing out, and next, I'll select the second cut.

MC: How much different can a good sequence make?

Kershenbaum: It's especially important in the promotional sense. That is, the way the album is programmed to get impressions from radio.

MC: Which do you feel is more important, a great studio or a great engineer in a so-so studio?

Kershenbaum: A great engineer is the key.

MC: What do you look for in an engineer?

Kershenbaum: I want someone who can enhance the type of project we're doing. For example, say Joe Jackson is doing an acoustic album; I would want someone who has good orchestral maneuvers.

MC: Producing has often been compared with painting a picture. That is, you as the painter and the artist as the color.

Kershenbaum: That's a good comparison. The way the picture looks can vary depending on which techniques are used. It would depend on how I used the echoes or on the placement of the instruments [in the mix]. You really can "look" into a mix and "see" it as well as hear it. As you add these things, they take up space. You can point out the guitar and the echo in the guitar. If you analyze a mix, there are those things, those hues.

MC: What instrument do you play?

Kershenbaum: In England, there's a lot of experimentation and mixing of concepts. This tends to produce great tunes in the end that weren't that expensive to play around with. It's just more difficult to do it here.

Kershenbaum: I play enough piano to be able to show somebody an idea.

MC: Do you consider A&R in Los Angeles as being in a growth stage?

Kershenbaum: Yes, although there are less signings. In England, there's a lot of experimentation and mixing of concepts. This tends to produce great tunes in the end that weren't that expensive to play around with. It's just more difficult to do it here.

MC: You've indicated that you're interested in getting involved in video as well as producing that single's audio track. What kinds of things could you improve by producing both?

Kershenbaum: We could do things with the record that would enhance the video and do things with the video that would enhance the record. By planning both simultaneously, and having the same people involved in both, it would be so much tighter. If I had the video in mind, I'd probably produce the audio

mix a little differently. I'd think about what we were going to do with it visually while making the record. The main thing is planning the two together.

MC: Who would you like to be among your first audio/video projects?

Kershenbaum: Cock Robin. I like [Peter King's] "When Your Heart Is Weak." It had a lot of character and feeling.

MC: With all the various projects you do, how do you keep fresh creatively?

Kershenbaum: I come to each one with a whole new objectivity by cutting tracks on one with the vocal. Then I go do another set of tracks and come back and mix the first one. It's like coming into the first one with fresh ears again. I get a clear picture rather than being right in the midst of it for a long period of time.

MC: What do you do when you're not doing music?

Kershenbaum: I love to go out and see what everybody else is doing. I have a relationship I spend time with, and I like the beach and sailing with friends. I do things that allow me to come back to music really refreshed and clear.

MC: Other than music, what makes you happy these days?

Kershenbaum: Exercising and taking care of myself. I've gotten to a place where I can work the hours I want to work, get the proper amount of rest and still have recreational time. It's a tricky balance. ■

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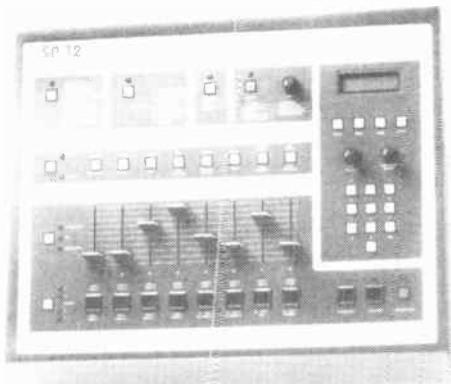
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FIELD TEST



SUBJECT: SP-12 Sampling Drum Machine
MANUFACTURER: E-mu Systems, Santa Cruz, CA
TEST SITE: Sounder Recording, Granada Hills, CA
REPORTER: Mark Gordon Creamer

Last week, I started work on a PolyGram Records album project by a terrific group called A-440. Tom Walsh, the group's drummer, brought not only an amazing set of Gary Grim drums but also his E-mu Systems SP-12, along with a new Trigger-to-MIDI device called the Sycologic (which we didn't have much luck with). The idea, because the SP-12 doesn't have trigger inputs, was to trigger some of the sampled sounds and use them as a supplement to the acoustic sounds.

It was in this first week of tracking that we learned the many wonders and the few pitfalls of the SP-12. Like some of the other more powerful instruments that I have reviewed, I won't have enough space to write about everything that the SP-12 does. This machine does so much that I'll concentrate on the things that make it unusual.

The SP-12 is a touch-sensitive drum machine that not only comes with 24 sounds on-board (including acoustic and electronic percussion) but also allows the user to sample eight more of his own sounds and place them into the fourth level of the programming buttons. (Word has it that the latest version of software for the SP-12 will allow 32 user sounds.) Each and every sound can then be altered in the way of tuning, level, and touch dynamics, and programmed into a sequence. Because the pitches of each sound are part of the segment program rather

than being something that can be changed after the segment or song has been written, we found out that you have to be pretty sure of the tunings before you start programming. Otherwise, the user will have to re-program the segments with the proper tunings.

On the back panel of the SP-12, there are eight channel outputs and one mono-mix output. The sounds selected can be routed either to any of the eight channel outputs, or to the mono-mix output. I imagine that the company decided that if a person was to buy a machine like the SP-12, that they would have access to a mixer large enough to avoid using the mono port. If they had used a stereo-mix output, they would also have had to supply provisions to pan the sound (as part of the program), which they opted not to do.

The front panel of the SP-12 is divided into seven sections (modules). They are: Set-Up, Cassette/Disk, Sync, Sample, Master Control, Programming, and Performance. Each of the functions within a module is selected by first pressing the module button, then selecting the function number on the ten-key pad.

The Cassette/Disk module allows for the selection of either a cassette machine or a standard Commodore 1541 drive for loading or saving of samples. The 1541 drive is very slow (by standards), but certainly faster than a cassette. The main thing is that they are inexpensive and can be found just about anywhere.

The company's latest software allows the user to load any sound into any user channel, rather than the channel it was saved from, and also lets the user copy sounds to other channels. This version will also be available as an update for existing machines. The problem is that all of the samples stored under the old software will not be capable of being used with the new software. The only solutions to the problem are to tape and then re-sample all of the user's library, or to find an updated SP-12 and load the sounds into the new system before you update your own.

The SP-12 has provisions for syncing by way of its Internal Clock, MIDI, SMPTE, or Click (selectable pulse code).

Before we started tracking the cuts on the album, we tried to "stripe" the tape with SMPTE code—a code that records hours, minutes, seconds, frames-per-second (24, 30, etc.), and divisions of a frame (up to 100) called bits. We then tried to use the SMPTE code to generate a synchronized pulse code and click for the band to play to, but no matter what combination of tracks and input/output levels we used, the pulse code would glitch. After several calls to the factory with

no change in our luck, we recorded a pulse code. Using it for sync, everything worked well. The one problem that I have with the recording of either the pulse or SMPTE is that the machine requires a full five volts at its input in order for the respective code to be recognized.

The Sampling module of the SP-12 is the most unique. Some of the selections are:

VU Mode: When selected, the LCD window of the machine shows the sampling level with very good resolution. The incoming level can then be set by the Level Control.

Threshold: Sets the point at which the signal automatically triggers the process and works very well for keeping noises from inadvertently being sampled.

Sample Length: Sets the amount of user memory allocated to the sample.

Arm Sample: Readies the machine to receive the sound, while Re-Sample does it again.

Force Sample is used wherever the operator wants to sample something that does not have a positive starting point. This could be a line out of one of the Three Stooges movies, like Curly's immortal "I am concentratin—but nothin's happening," or something a little less provocative, like a reverse cymbal.

There is, also on the top panel, a button that will allow the user to enter an internal tempo simply by tapping the button in time. The machine will average the taps and compute a tempo.

The back panel contains corrections for the eight channels of output, mix-out, sample-in, MIDI, sync (tape, SMPTE), and the disk drive.

HOW IT WORKS:

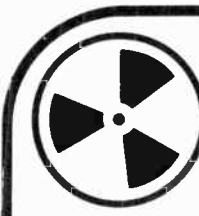
I have to repeat I just haven't had the space required to write about everything the SP-12 will do. It seems to me that the problems I have found are ones that can be easily remedied in future software updates (and probably will be by the time you read this). The overriding thing about this machine is how it sounds, and that is *wonderful*. The only internal sound I would change at all would be the hi-hats, and considering there are 24 sounds on-board, that's a pretty good average.

Even more remarkable is how well the SP-12 samples. Like the Emulator II, the SP-12 has 12-bit sampling with a high enough rate to give full fidelity playback. This machine makes really good digital recordings. List price: \$2745. ■

If you have, or hear about, something new, write to me: Mark Gordon Creamer, c/o Sounder Recording, 17021 Chatsworth St., Granada Hills, CA 91344.

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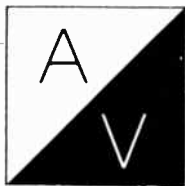
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by Billy Cioffi

AUDIO UPDATE

From Small Things, Baby...

8- & 16-Track Studios

J.E. Sound: Geffen recording artists the Models in the room working up songs for their upcoming release; John Warner is producing, with John Goodenough engineering... XYZ is using the facilities in collaboration with producer George Tutko for Atlantic Records. Goodenough is also behind the boards on this project.

Theta Sound: Writer David Russo has been working on various projects, including the theme for Dick Clark's new *Nite Time* TV show... Writer/performer Trakker has been demoing up his new band... Celtic folklorist Robin Williamson pressing his *Legacy of Scottish Harpers* for manufacture and distribution in Europe... Studio owner Randy Tobin tracking writer Bob Franklin on two new songs.

24-Track Studios

Image Recording: Studio A has MCA recording artist Giuffria cutting tracks with producer Pat Glasser and engineer John Van Nest. In Studio B, Hinton Battle is recording for a Warner Bros. project produced by Phil Gladstone and John Van Tongren... T.J. Knowles recently produced an ad spot for the California Lottery, and Jay Gruska was also in recording vocals with Martha Vidal; both projects engineered by Tom Seufert... Robie Porter is producing a single for singer/songwriter David Pomeranz... Engineer Gabe Veltri just finished recording the group Inosion, produced by Freddie McFinn, while Steve Krause is engineering the group 5150.

Music Grinder: Deniece Williams is in the studio working on a new album, with Jay Gruska producing. Stevie Nicks finished recording tracks for her current hit album, *Rock a Little*, with Rock Nowles producing and John Kovarek engineering. Guitarist *extraordinaire* Allen Holdsworth producing his own newest Enigma release, with Robert Feist as engineer. Gavin Christopher cutting a new LP, with Carl Struken and Evan Rogeres producing and Bob Rosa behind the console. Poison, another Enigma act, completed their new album, with producer Rick Browde and engineer Jim Faracci. Rodney Crowell laying tracks for his new record for CBS, with David Thoner at the board.

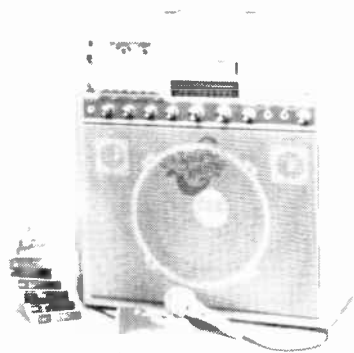
Capitol: George Clinton getting down with his band self in Recording Room 2, mastering his new Capitol recording with engineer Eddy Schreyer. Studio B is the scene for a 48-track mix on the soundtrack for the film "Wild Cats," with producer James Howard and engineers Bill Schnee and Charlie Paakkari.

Sound Solution: Dogtown is inside with producer Jere Mendelson recording their first EP; Richard Jallis is engineering the project. Songwriter Jeff Barry was in recording a demo for an upcoming TV pilot. The ubiquitous George Clinton recording his latest, *R&B Skeletons in the Closet*, which will feature songs from a forthcoming Lou Gossett film. The session was engineered by Leonard Jackson with Janine Cirillo seconding.

Lion Share Recording: In Studio B, Michael Omartian is producing Peter Cetera, ex-Chicago, for Warner Bros. Engineering is John Guess, with assistance by Khaliq Glover... Jeffrey Osborne ensconced in Studio A, with Tommy Vicari engineering the overdubs and mixing... Barbra Streisand mixing tracks for her HBO special, with Humberto Gatica engineering and Laura Livingston engineering; Arista's Jermaine Jackson in Studio B with the same team... Qwest star James Ingram self-producing his new album, with Tommy Vicari engineering and Laura Livingston assisting.

The Sound: Product Review

The Singing Machine



From time to time within the audio community, a product is introduced that has the potential to change the way we operate in some fundamental way. Here's a product with that capability. Don't laugh—in Japan, this little number forms the basis of a billion-dollar-a-year industry! The Singing Machine is a self-contained tape recorder/playback unit that allows the user to amplify and/or record his voice along with pre-recorded song cartridges that contain musical backgrounds; a dual cassette provides a copy of the performance. The Singing Machine, known in Japan as "Karoake" (empty orchestra), is a fixture in nightclubs throughout the Orient. People line up for their moment in the spotlight as they perform to background tapes that are astonishingly well produced and played.

This is not the first time the Machine's manufacturer has attempted to find an audience in the U.S. This time, however, the marketing concept is much more youth-oriented: It features pre-recorded tracks that are exact duplications of today's Top 40. So if you have a desire to be the Boss or Cyndi Lauper for a few minutes, you no longer have to close your eyes and open your mouth in the shower. The company has a wide range of models available, from a home unit that contains echo and pitch control for several hundred dollars, to a \$2000 unit that includes digital delay and pitch control without speed change (a very sophisticated feature). A nightclub chain in San Diego is already featuring singing machines on Sunday and Monday nights.

This novelty suggests two questions. First, will it put musicians out of work? Perhaps, but the Top 40 band is practically a thing of the past, anyway. The rise of dance clubs and the fact that most Top 40 bands cannot hope to duplicate today's records have all but sealed the doom of copy bands. In fact, the copy band biz has never really recovered from disco. The other issue is purely psychological: While the Japanese may be wild for the Singing Machine, even the product's manufacturer has expressed some skepticism off the record as to whether or not the American public will go for it to anywhere near the same degree. On a much more limited scale, the Singing Machine people feel it will be of great use to the professional singer and player in that it gives them a chance to practice without other musicians. On this level, the Machine may gain an initial foothold in this country.

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DEADLINES FOR ALL MIDEM SUBMISSIONS — JAN. 20, 1986

The Image: Shrink Rap

My Hour With MTV

by Doctor Memory



My task. Watch an uninterrupted hour of MTV, and comment from the psychiatrist's perspective. "Just what is MTV doing to our kids?" asks the crusading A/V editor. Well, we've all known that it sells records and sets fashion. But lately, the PMRC suggests it can create perverts and anarchists. So I cancel my next appointment, hold all my calls, and put the TV on the couch. It's 10 p.m. Friday—no school tomorrow—prime viewing time for that impressionable crowd that's too far underage to drive, let alone drink.

Madonna in "Material Girl": She's decadent, with an aura of availability that could lead men astray and cause little girls to show their lingerie. But Keith Carradine wins her with a bouquet of daisies, then romances her in a pickup truck. Madonna even sings that she likes boys who "save their pennies." She teases and rejects those who throw diamonds at her. This video seems to encourage hard work and strong character. Sure she's sexy—very sexy—but she is attracted to somebody you can respect. This video comments on how things are and how they should be. And I agree. I make a note to remind myself to play this for my kids—if I ever have any. Obviously, there's no danger here.

But soon, **Dee Snyder** of **Twisted Sister** starts screaming that the top 20 heavy metal videos can conquer the world. Only an adult could worry about this guy—no kid could take him seriously. He's a cartoon with great hair who's having a lot of fun. Using hyperbole and distorted guitar, these songs work through adolescent issues with authority figures and with such adult bugaboos as sex and drugs and violence. By identifying with "role models" like Dee, kids can reduce their anxieties of oncoming adult responsibilities by vicariously living out their fantasies. Maybe they'll be better able to deal with such stuff as it arises in daily life. C'mon, does anybody think Twisted Sister is actually saying you should throw Dad out the window? No more, I would think, than any of our nationally syndicated political cartoonists is suggesting that the President is an idiot (I better think about that one). Such weird phenomena as the Nightstalker are not caused by a song any more than the *National Enquirer* causes Jackie Onassis, UFOs, or cancer.

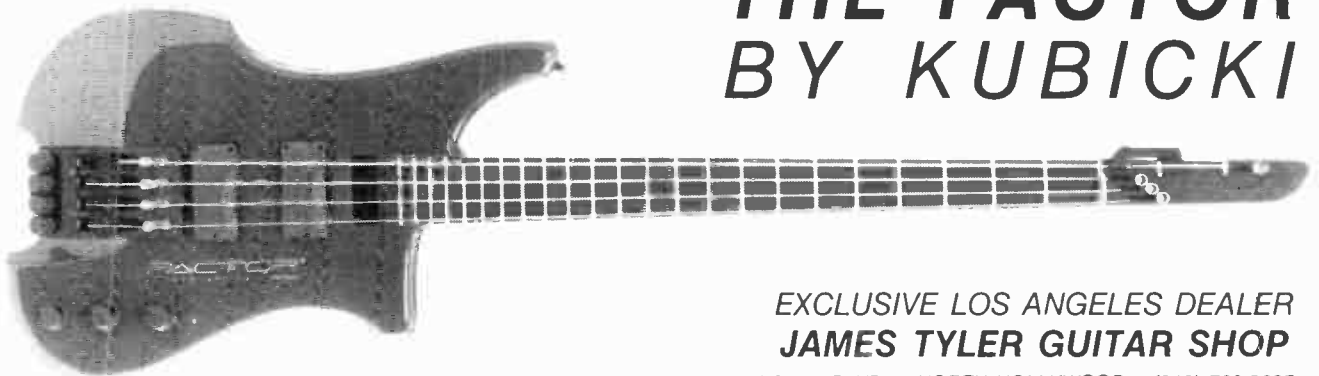
Now **Tom Petty** sings "So You Wanna Be a Rock and Roll Star." Me too, Tom! You guys seem to be having such a good time onstage. . . . **Dire Straits** does "Walk of Life": clips of another bunch of guys having fun playing music—interspersed with short segments of football and baseball highlights and bloopers. Competition, camaraderie, human frailty; just how will this stuff affect the viewers?

Now look. Sure, what you see and hear—all around you, let alone onstage—can affect you. But music and video are responses to what is all around us and to what is in us. "Teach your children well" is an imperative. But censorship doesn't work. It doesn't succeed in protecting somebody from something. It only draws attention to it. Every new generation has always spent a lot of energy trying to find out what the older generation has tried to hide. The Washington Wives retrieved **W.A.S.P.** from the record graveyard—that is, the K-Mart cut-out bins. "F**k Like a Beast" has gotten more coverage through attempts at censorship than it ever would have otherwise. See—it was just mentioned in print *again*. All this does is let kids see that this music is powerful—it frightens their parents. Trying to squash it only gives it *more* power—and makes it more attractive to the new generation struggling to find its place amidst the old. Kids will always look for the skeletons in their parents' closets. It is the obligation of youth to test limits and explore dark places. This is the process of growth. Kids are not stupid. They're just kids. They know they have weaknesses and that there is danger. They can only learn from the adult examples that acknowledge and confront all of life. They cannot trust anyone who hides ideas from them.

Back to the matter at hand: Most of the rest of the hour is made up of commercials and forgettable videos: some are sexy, some are silly. But most are bland and innocuous. Just what is MTV doing to our kids? Not much, I'd say. All it's really doing is keeping them off the streets.

Doctor Memory is the pen name of a Beverly Hills psychiatrist who plays sax for local rock band Bozart. He claims to not be the model for Prince's "Doctor Everything's-gonna-be-all-right."

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Reviews

CONCERTS

Photo by Lesley Campbell



Photo by Abe Perlestein

Moods for Moderns: Astbury of Cult (left), Maniac Merchant.

The Cult/ Tex & the Horseheads/ T.S.O.L.

Santa Monica Civic
Santa Monica

Seemed like everybody and his acid-drenched uncle was on hand to welcome this season's newest, grooviest band, the Cult. Crossing boundaries of style and youth movements past and present, the Cult is the perfect band for the new breed of post-punk-gloom-hippies—the Hate-Ashbury set (pun intended), because they combine the coolest of recent English post-punk-pop with the best of the late Sixties/early Seventies. Actually, there's sort of an emphasis on the older styles, as it's hard to watch vocalist Ian Astbury (the only original band member from the days of Southern Death Cult and Death Cult) and not think immediately of Jim Morrison or Mick. Not that he's a rip-off artist; rather, he's taken the best qualities of these bygone images (we're referring to a '65 model Jagger) and reworked them, mostly in terms of movement, to fit his needs. Astbury's voice is all his own. Strong and clear, with a ringing, vibrato-less quality, it held up well through the majority of the set, though by "Spiritwalker," the closer, his pipes were getting a little weary.

The chord progressions that comprise most of the first two Led Zep LPs have been carefully rewritten to sound as current as Siouxsie or Echo. Billy Duffy, who plays an old White Falcon, has no qualms about piling on loads of delay, chorus, phase, or any other damn thing. He pretty much leaves all ef-

fects on stun all the time, and while it should get tedious, it nonetheless works. He's got his own psychedelic-metal sound, and a rockabilly haircut to prove it. Duffy provided a high point in the show, when, after breaking a string on the Falcon, he nabbed a Les Paul and began the next tune. Before he made it to the bridge, he popped another one, and being out of guitars, he hurled the Paul to the ground and stormed off, returning less miffed with the repaired Falcon. No big deal, but it was nice to see someone do something just cuz he was pissed, not because it was planned in the set.

The band played most of their new LP, *Love*, and predictably, "Rain," "Brother Wolf, Sister Moon," and the single/video, "She Sells Sanctuary," got the best responses. They sounded huge, full, and very slick, without compromising a bit of rock & roll energy. I thought they were great. Of their older material, "Dreamtime" probably came off the best, showing it's not just *Love* that they're riding on.

Opener Tex were sloppy but caught some grooves along the way, aided impressively by drummer Wilbur, who's supposedly getting the boot from the band. Too bad—he was the best part of their show. Tex is cute for a while, but drunken slobbers are only funny for about ten minutes max, thank you.

T.S.O.L. rocked hard and made some good noise along the way, but attention kept wandering to the endless parade of girls in the most fringed outfits of the season. Cutest girls I've seen in a non-metal concert in at least two years (not to mention the highest number of kids looking for acid since the 45 Grave shows at the Whisky).

—Screamin' Lord Duff

10,000 Maniacs At Club Lingerie Hollywood

The Maniacs had actually made their L.A. area debut the night before, but this Friday night show had the aura of an event even before the highly touted band from upstate New York took the stage. Among those on hand were the *creme* of the L.A. rock scene, from musicians (the couple of Peter Case and Victoria Williams and, reportedly, John Lydon) to critics and scenemakers (you know who you are).

Perhaps the crowd could best be described with one of the Maniacs' own song titles: "Everyone a Puzzle Lover." The attitude of most in attendance, too, can be summed up with a line from another Maniacs song, "Scorpio Rising": "Amaze me now." The particular puzzle in question was embodied in the performance of singer/lyricist Natalie Merchant, and amaze she did, as did the entire band.

The set began well after midnight with a couple songs in the pastoral neo-folk-rock style that has led to general comparisons with R.E.M. and early Fairport Convention. It's a well-executed, unified band sound that doesn't so much assert as seduce, with each of the six musicians serving a vital function, though none save guitarist/mandolinist Robert Buck really stands out from the crowd.

But then there's Merchant. Spinning and dancing, totally caught up in the music—an arty Eastern equivalent of Maria McKee's L.A. cowgirl—this tiny dynamo exuded a mystery as rich as her voice and as intriguing as her words.

So intriguing was she that one hardly noticed when, several songs into the set, the band broke into near-anarchical thrashing centered on Buck's wild guitar. Buck, looking like a shy accountant, was at times nearly as fascinating to watch as Merchant as he shifted with ease between gentle folksy playing and noise excursions that would make Adrian Belew seem tame by comparison.

Perhaps it was the display of these dichotomies that made the show so special. Anytime the music seemed to become one-dimensional, an element of wildness was injected. Just when Merchant seemed too preciously arty (holding an old photograph as she sang, for example), she countered with an expression or spontaneous movement that proved her to be totally genuine.

It's doubtful that this show solved the puzzle for any in the audience. Each box that was opened revealed another one to crack open. Still, based on post-concert discussions, it is safe to say that most on hand will remember this evening for a long time, its insights rekindled with each listening to the Maniacs' recent Elektra album, *The Wishing Chair*. It's also a good bet that many

made a point of seeing the band in at least one of its two subsequent area performances, and/or will be sure to catch the Maniacs next time they're in town. I know I will.

—Steve Hochman



Photo by Abe Perlestein

Kid Creole & the Coconuts

The Palace
Hollywood

It's been a couple of years now since Kid Creole & the Coconuts' musical and visual extravaganza last hit Hollywood, and as a local firm of lawyers are fond of saying, "It's about time." In an age of synthesizers, computerized drums and robotic lead singers, these guys are like something straight out of a time-warp. There's a snappy horn section that really swings, a bunch of rhythm aces that really have rhythm, the looney costumes and acrobatics of Coati Mundi, the precision moves of the minimally clad Coconuts, and, of course, the suave stage presence of the Master of Ceremonies himself, Kid Creole, a.k.a. August Darnell.

Like a fine wine, this madcap combo (which rose from the ashes of Doctor Buzzard's Original Savanah Band) has simply gotten better and better over the years, and the nonstop touring of Europe (where the guys and gals are understandably Big Stars) has fine-tuned the outfit into its present impressive high performance. Every choreographed move, every musical lick was right in place as Darnell led his eager troops through a generous set that included such old faves as "I'm a Wonderful Thing" and "Stool Pigeon," and such newer fare as "Endicott" and "You Can't Keep a Good Man Down" from their recent *In Praise of Older Women* album (Sire).

Musically, the accent was noticeably more dance-oriented than in previous outings, but the group still serves up a dazzling aural cocktail that mixes everything from big band salsa and rumba to soul, funk, R&B, and straight-ahead pop, with powerful results. Even the coolest member of the audience is forced to join in one of these parties, and, not surprisingly, when it was time to go, Kid Creole & the Coconuts were dragged back onstage for another mini-set of encores by the enthusiastic crowd. Darnell may never win prizes for his vocals, and the Coconuts may never make most people's best-dressed lists—but who cares. An absolute must for anyone still in the land of the living.

—Iain Blair

Reviews

ALBUMS



Various Artists

A Town South of Bakersfield Enigma

The fact that this ten-song compilation of California country even exists is amazing in view of the fact that two years ago—before their noisome cowpunk critters—country was about as unhip here as New Coke. Things change. Credits go to all concerned here for a by-and-large worthy attempt at capturing the budding scene *without* using cowpunk. But then, producers Dan Fredman and Pete Anderson have toiled as musicians in the very vineyards they cull from, the latter as Dwight Yoakam's producer/guitarist.

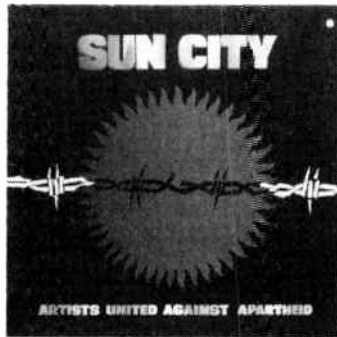
Hybrids—lively, squawking, diverse permutations of the country beast—are most abundant: rockin' Rosie Flores in duet with marvelous hotpicker Albert Lee, in a fluid Forties-style swing train song worth the record (though Asleep at the Wheel beat them songwise with "My Baby Thinks He's a Train"). The Eddys fortuitously twist a Cajun fiddle through a Wynn Stewart winner (that's in Bakersfield, folks), "Big, Big Love"; in "I'll Be Gone," scene-maker Yoakam revs up bluegrass (with Anderson's super guitar work), and adds an Eighties theme—sort of Bill Monroe-meets-modern sex. The Lonesome Strangers are beguiling and quirky with a strange tune, "Lonesome Pine"—way-out-west-bent-through-a-mirror (well, mebbe a little cowpunk).

Yet, it takes unassuming good ole boy George Highfill to provide that *true ring*—aching his way disarmingly through his "Waitin' Up"; equally authentic is full-blown Patsy Cline soundalike Kathy Robertson, terrific on a bouncy Ray Pricey tune (actually penned by local Re Winkler). Vets Billy Swan and Katy Moffat sound most seasoned—Moffat on a lushly heartrending classic by her brother, Hugh—but Swan's Hollyesque appeal isn't best represented by this country-like cut; anyway, it's stretching it to include him—he's arguably closer to rock, like the Everlys (at least his best stuff is).

Which brings up the point: that the record doesn't quite represent a scene yet. Moffat and Lee large-

ly tour; Flores has thrown in her lot with the Screechin' (sorry) *Scream-in'* Sirens; the Eddys are no more; and as for Highfill and Robertson? They toil in them *real* gin-soaked dens that rock crits (who yell the loudest for the Real Stuff) wouldn't be caught dead in—nor (I'll bet) would they draw at Le Lingerie. None of which discounts the entertainment value here, of course. And if and when this seed flowers into a plant, I'll be glad to eat it, roots and all.

—Judy Raphael



Artists United Against Apartheid

Sun City Manhattan

When you pick up a copy of *Sun City*, don't expect the laid-back, ladi-da feeling of "We Are the World." That would be like ordering tea and getting bourbon. This record is angry. Apartheid, the central theme it explores, is ugly and frustrating, with lyrics that are blatant and to the point. Plan on stomping to the beat rather than swaying softly to the chorus. Get ready for some education and exposure to various types of music. But don't label this as just another benefit record. It's much more than that.

Little Steven is not known for his subtlety; he has a penchant for exposing injustice through his music. But what makes *Sun City* so special is that he has compelled over 50 other artists to express that same immediacy in their own ways. While the *We Are the World* album came off like a collection of leftovers (with the exception of the Huey Lewis and Bruce Springsteen cuts), *Sun City* is fresh and focused. The material was written specifically for the album, and the title track sets the creative tone.

Besides the no-nonsense lyrics and mix of different styles of music on the cut, there is a lot of background ad libbing, giving it a more expressive feel. The emotions cut through on "Sun City." When Bruce Springsteen cries out, "yeah, yeah," you can sense him bending over from the effort. That anguish is also evident in Peter Gabriel's "No More Apartheid." Over an instrumental track, Gabriel repeatedly moans the title phrase, like a trapped soul struggling to get out. The passion builds with "Revolutionary Situation," compiled and edited by Keith Le Blanc and the News Dissector.

It is an intriguing combination of music and speeches from various U.S. and South African leaders, including Nelson Mandela.

Side Two includes a second version of "Sun City," which drops the first verse of the song and incorporates more guitars. (I prefer the first version.) "Let Me See Your I.D." features rap contributions from various artists, including Peter Wolf, Grandmaster Melle Mel, and Peter Garrett, with spoken verses by Gil Scott-Heron. The song alludes to the South African policy that requires all blacks to carry "papers." Scott-Heron's comments are often amusing, yet poignant. "The Struggle Continues" showcases the talents of Herbie Hancock and Miles Davis, among others, in a progressive jazz piece. Last is a fiery acoustic number by Bono, Keith Richards, and Ron Wood called "Silver and Gold." (For some reason, this cut is not listed on the album jacket, although it appears on the record label. A goof or late entry—take your pick.)

While *We Are the World* came from the heart, *Sun City* goes for the gut. In bringing together artists of diverse styles and backgrounds, it acts as a stirring aural metaphor for universal brotherhood. It's also a fine musical work. —Lydia Piper



Del Fuegos

Boston, Mass. Slash/WB

This spirited band is out to show there's more to Boston than baked beans and tea parties. Del Fuegos is probably best-known currently for its funky Miller TV commercial. If that first gulp whets your thirst for more, you'll find it here (and on their powerhouse Slash debut from '84). "Don't Run Wild" is a bare-bones grinder and the first single/video release. The drummer is ferocious here, calling to mind Charlie Watts on "Honky Tonk Women." "Hand in Hand" and "Fade to Blue" feature strong, memorable guitar work and gritty vocals from Dan Zane. The album as a whole echoes the Stones, the Rascals, Sir Douglas Quintet, and the Band—especially in the keyboard contributions of producer Mitch Froom. What hits hardest is the band's stripped-down energy. The writing is hot, and several of these cuts would sound at home on anybody's radio. Zane mixes his influences and originality in a way that gives his voice a real edge over most. He sounds best to me on "Coupe DeVille," a slow, soulful Cadillac walk blending Rick Danko

and Randy Newman. You don't have to be a Kennedy or a Celtic season ticket holder to enjoy *Boston, Mass.* Just being a fan of what Dave Alvin calls "American Music" will give you the key to the city.

—Jim Maloney



Waterboys

This Is the Sea Island

The Waterboys are the brainchild of one Mike Scott, a scruffy native of Scotland who is as much a poet/troubadour as he is a Dylanesque rocker. Vocalist/guitarist Scott and bandmates Anthony Thistlethwaite (saxophone), Karl Wallinger (bass/keyboards), Chris Whiten (drums), Steven Wickham (violin), and Roddy Lorimer (trumpet) create a majestic folk-rock wall-of-sound that echoes the best of visionaries like Van Morrison, Dylan, and Springsteen.

At 26, Scott, too, is a kind of prodigy visionary whose spirituality and soul places the Waterboys above much of the current wave of flashy but shallow European bands. This, their second album, does much to legitimize the concepts and vision first revealed in the 1984 mini-LP, *The Waterboys*. Songs like the single "The Whole of the Moon," "Spirit," and the title song offer further glimpses into Scott's contemplative spiritual visions, while "Don't Bang a Drum," "Be My Enemy," and "Medicine Bow" anchor the Waterboys in traditional, earthy rock.

What makes this album so exciting is the raw talent evident. While there are inconsistencies and weak points, *This Is the Sea* is a major evolutionary step from the first offering, and it suggests that there is much more to come. For the moment, the regal trumpet, wistful fiddle, raunchy guitar, and Eighties keyboard techniques combine with Scott's ragged, searching vocals to generate a fiery and heartfelt blast in these icy, mechanical times.

—Ben Brooks

Golden Palominos

Visions of Excess Celluloid

Every so often, a new record emerges that's a little too hip for most program directors to fit into their homogenized formats. Such is the case with the Golden Palominos' *Visions of Excess* (on Celluloid, a New York-based label

Golden Palominos

that just opened an office in Los Angeles). Conceived, produced, and arranged by ex-Lounge Lizard/Pere Ubu drummer Anton Fier, *Visions* is without a doubt THE record for tastes that stray beyond the norm. The diverse set of musicians employed here—Michael Stipe (R.E.M.), John Lydon, Richard Thompson, Jack Bruce, Bill Laswell (Material), Carla Bley, and Bernie Worrell, for starters—goes a long way toward explaining the raw magic that Fier has captured. The result is an eclectic array of tunes and styles, ranging from Cream-inspired rootsy rock to post-Sex Pistols thrash to airy romanticism.

If you're an R.E.M./Michael Stipe fanatic, the LP is an absolute must. Stipe co-wrote two out of the three tracks that feature his vocals. Stipe, who obviously has a nose for experimentation, here exposes a facet of himself that exceeds his laid-back R.E.M. approach. "Cluster Train" permits the singer to shed that glossy face to reveal a roughness that only comes out of a live performance. "Boy (Go)," a cut which found its way into R.E.M.'s set on their last tour, is much more restrained. It's a wonder that this cut hasn't at least reached moderate rotation on commercial stations—the cut breathes accessibility. Perhaps there's too much R.E.M. on the airwaves.

Other cuts worth a mention are "Kind of True," which features the fluid vocals of newcomers Syd Straw and the frenzied "The Animal Speaks," featuring the inimitable Lydon—why doesn't his solo stuff ever sound this good?

Rumor has it that the Golden Palominos—whose core consists of Fier, bassist Laswell, and guitarist Jody Harris—will be touring in early '86. The big question is, what musicians will fill out the lineup?

—William Clodfelter



MORE CRITIX PIX: BEST LP'S OF '85

Randal A. Case

1. Big Audio Dynamite: *This Is Big Audio Dynamite* (Columbia)—Columbia Records sends me a little pre-Christmas bundle, which I poke through absently. Hmmm, what's this? *This Is Big Audio Dynamite*, says the LP. I'd call that truth in advertising: This danceable offering from Mick Jones and friends

is absolutely delicious. A MUST-BUY!

2. Cock Robin: *Cock Robin* (Columbia)—Out of the vast, head-spinning numbers of releases I've heard in the last twelve months, this debut LP leads the pack. Cock Robin is the best new band to come out with vinyl on a major label. Peter Kingsbery, who writes the tunes and shares lead vocals, is the best new songwriter. And the sexy, sultry co-lead singer, Anna La Cazio, is assuredly the best new female vocalist.

3. Midnight Oil: *Red Sails in the Sunset* (Columbia)—This album lacks some of the immediacy of Midnight Oil's earlier releases (*Heal Injuries* and *Place Without a Postcard*—which is magnificent—come to mind). *Red Sails* is a challenging and fulfilling work—it just takes a little longer to realize it. A heartily recommended LP.

4. Sting: *The Dream of the Blue Turtles* (A&M)—I initially was put off by this masterwork because I felt it was a trifle overblown. But we all make mistakes. *Dream of the Blue Turtles* is a beautiful record. And "Fortress Around Your Heart" gets my nomination as the best single of the year.

5. Suzanne Vega: *Suzanne Vega* (A&M)—What a marvelously vulnerable, soft-voiced creature this Suzanne Vega is. Buy this album and listen to it by candlelight.

Billy Cioffi

1. Dire Straits: *Brothers in Arms* (WB)—Mark Knopfler perfectly straddles the fence between art and commerciality. Money for *something!*

2. Marti Jones: *Unsophisticated Time* (A&M)—A real dark horse that I just couldn't take off my turntable. Features songs by one of pop music's most unheralded songwriters, Peter Holsapple of the dB's.

3. Wally Badarou: *Echoes* (Island)—Another dark horse by instrumentalist/composer Badarou. All instrumentals, *Echoes* is a sublime combination of synthesizers and percussion whose understated mood variances evokes a different emotional state on each track; a lovely record.

4. Robert Palmer: *Riptide* (Island)—Always one of my favorite (and most underrated) singers, Palmer has delivered his most consistent effort in years. After the awful Power Station debacle, my faith in Palmer has been restored.

5. Tie: *Crueleros/Hooters/Bongos/Paul Young*—In a year that seemed to be lacking in the creative bombast of last year, these records contained the most potential. While not quite as consistent as those above, these LPs are still right up there with the year's best. The fact that these are all pretty much new artists is most encouraging.

Ronald Coleman

1. Meat Puppets: *Up on the Sun* (SST)—This album is 1985 in terms of fresh, homegrown rock. The sun-baked sound of this power trio from Phoenix epitomizes the state of a very contemporary, progressive rock, sans the polish. It moves conventions of pop rock

far forward while remaining as irresistible as any of the latest hooks Stevie Wonder has laid down.

2. Lloyd Cole & the Commotions: *Rattlesnakes* (Geffen)—Scottish pop bands have made considerable inroads in the States during 1985, and this outfit is definitely in the driver's seat, with a snappy blend of soulful pop and folk, coupled with clever songwriting. Cole's articulations are charming in many instances, all the more reason to keep a close watch on him and his band.

3. The Blasters: *Hardline* (Slash/WB)—Yet another American rock classic ignored by too many ears. Dave Alvin's guitar and pen have come of age, while brother Phil maintains one of the most powerful and distinguishable sets of pipes this side of the Mississippi. The vivid tales of love and injustice really hit home.

4. Talking Heads: *Little Creatures* (Sire)—The second decade of this art rock institution begins with a lesser challenge than what we've grown to expect. Still, the Heads are still stretching grey matter out farther than 90 percent of the vinyl released this year. The back-to-basics arrangements and close-to-the-heart themes are skillfully adapted to fit their unconventional landscape. Great cover, too!

5. The Blue Nile: *A Walk Across the Rooftops* (A&M)—Tis a valley of vibrant, sophisticated song stylings shaded by the understated, soulful crooning of Paul Buchanan. These three young lads from Glasgow (Buchanan, Joseph Moore, and Robert Bell) weave a lush, unique sound which is too far ahead of its time for any radio programmers (excepting a lonely few) to touch.

Michael Fremer

1. Richard Thompson: *Across a Crowded Room* (Polydor)—A unique and brilliant talent and exquisite guitarist puts together a haunting album everyone should taste and hardly anybody does. Bad taste rules!

2. Don Henley: *Building the Perfect Beast* (Geffen)—Henley did it with this album. While there are less than inventive riffs going on here occasionally, songs like "Sunset Grill" and "Boys of Summer" help make this one of the best—if not *the* best—album of 1985. And it sold, too! Good taste rules!

3. Van Morrison: *Live at the Grand Opera Belfast* (Mercury)—Recorded in 1983, this record yields more pure musical pleasure than just about anything else I've heard this year. The band, the backup singers, and, of course, the brilliance of Van Morrison make this a must-have album.

4. Bryan Ferry: *Boys and Girls* (WB)—If music were fattening, I'd look like Kate Smith from this album. It curls around your brain like smoke and settles on the arteries like cholesterol. It's that rich.

5. A Three-Record Set: *Eurythmics' Be Yourself Tonight, XTC's Big Express, and Conjure*, a collection of songs set to the texts of black poet Ishmael Reed. You haven't seen this three-record package? Darn, you'll just have to buy them separately.

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Reviews

CLUBS

Reign Makers

*F.M. Station
North Hollywood*

□ **The Players:** Timothy Patrick, guitar, vocals; Mannie Cien, bass, vocals; Eddie Croft, sax, flute; Barry Brown, keyboards, vocals; Rob Dyer, lead guitar, vocals; Cliff Almond, drums.

□ **Material:** Considering they come all the way from San Diego, the Reign Makers consistently draw an impressive following. This may be because their "roots" sound offers an alternative to the usual country, hip-hillbilly roots underground so prevalent in Los Angeles. Beginning and ending with their anthem-like rain dance, the Reign Makers' material fuses pow-wow (American Indian-style) with ska, psychedelia, and good ol' Jerry Lee Lewis-flavored classic rock. Needless to say, dancing is subsequently a common reaction.

□ **Musicianship:** The Reign Makers' front line, essentially everyone except drummer Almond, creates a sinuous wall of sound. Croft's sax lines, similar to those of ska bands such as the English Beat and Madness, occasionally have the dynamics to break out of the band's guitarish barrier. The effect is uplifting. On the whole, though, the band seems to focus more on creating a strong rhythmical backdrop for Patrick's lyrics than on individual musicianship.



Smile: Perseverance pays off.

□ **Performance:** As performers, the Reign Makers are pretty straightforward. Energy is high and their American roots-oriented music stands on its own. The band's individuality comes across as interesting, but in a way that could easily be overlooked. First, you have to consider the play on words implied by the band's name. Instead of the psychic power associated with the traditional Indian "rain maker," the term "Reign Makers" suggests dominance and power in the world of man. Taken a step further, the bandmembers uniformly dress themselves in a clash that blends American Indian with its cowboy adversary. Not only does the band reflect on American history, they manipulate it in a way that depicts their outlook on America today.

□ **Summary:** With an EP in the making, the Reign Makers should do well with college radio. These guys frequent both Wong's West and the F.M. Station, so there's no excuse to miss them.

—William J.

Smile

*The Country Club
Reseda*

□ **The Players:** Tommy Girvin, guitar; David Blade, bass guitar; Scott Waller, lead vocals; Mark Poynter, keyboards; Tony Pacheco, drums.

□ **Material:** Smile is a Los Angeles band that was founded by David Blade and Tommy Girvin. The material—all written by Girvin, Walker, or Blade—ranges widely in subject matter. A couple of their standout tunes include "I Want You" and "Loose Ends." After playing four and five nights a week at several of the major nightclubs in the L.A. area, Smile decided to cut a record in order to reach a larger audience. Their self-titled debut MCA album is a collection of the group's harder-edged material.

□ **Musicianship:** Each individual is proficient on his instrument, and the group as a whole plays well together. The two standout individuals are Girvin



The Reign Makers: A mix of ska, psyche, rock, & American Indian—Pow-Wow Pop.



on guitar and Blade, who played a nice bass solo. Waller is an adequate singer, but does a better job of communicating to the audience through his dancing abilities.

□ **Performance:** Smile has obviously built a large and loyal following over the years, as was evident that night at the Country Club. Their stage setup is attractive, and each individual has a good stage appearance. The band was too loud at times, but that could have been the soundman's fault.

□ **Summary:** Much of Smile's success is due to the fact that they "stuck by their guns" in the early stages of their career. One of their strengths lies in the band's optimistic approach to performing. The necessary energy and enthusiasm are present at all times.

—Dave Black

Maurice & the Cliches

Wong's West Santa Monica

□ **The Players:** Maurice Depas, vocals; Gary Westlake, guitar, backup vocals; Paul Wilson-Brown, keyboards, guitar, backup vocals; Wayne Clack, bass, backup vocals; Michael Aleksich, drums, backup vocals; Rose Harte, backup vocals; Scott Abercrombie, backup vocals.

□ **Material:** Maurice & the Cliches play hybrid rock & roll, borrowing frenetic energy from punk (as with set opener "All in the Game") and slick dance grooves from the streets of urban America ("Sunset on Sunset" is the best example here).

□ **Musicianship:** The Cliches' rhythm section is about as tight as Aleksich's snare strainer, and a lot of credit for this goes to the drummer himself. Aleksich can play very fast, and with a lot of power and endurance—no choking here, and that's a must for high-speed aural barrages like "Affection." Musically, this band's material is more rhythm-oriented than melodic, but Westlake displayed some prime harmonic lead chops, and Wilson-Brown moved back and forth from keyboards to (mostly) rhythm guitar with ease. Clack's bass style is more solid than showy; he and Aleksich groove well together. Principal backing vocalists Harte and Abercrombie (in their debut appearance with the Cliches) were buried in the mix, but when they were audible, they blended well with the rest of the group. Depas' singing style is more conversational than melodic, but his pitch is true and he has power to spare. Alas, he too fell victim to the mixing board, and his lyrics were often unintelligible, which is most unfortunate, because...

□ **Performance:** ... Maurice Depas is truly one of the finest performers to grace the rock & roll scene in years. He's definitely an original, a trailblazer with pieces of Richard Harris and punked-up Richard Burton thrown on the grill. Drama is the high point of this band, and Maurice revels in it with maniacal intensity; he could write the book on *1001 Ways to Use a Microphone Stand*. In contrast, the Cliches are Maurice's perfect foils; each player is active and visually interesting, but never dominant. They all interact well with Maurice, and he includes them, but they never get in his way—they know they've got a live one here.

□ **Summary:** If the Stones had broken out in the Eighties, they might have been Maurice & the Cliches. [Now, they'd have been *Leatherwolf*.—Ed.] With strong, danceable material (people were on the floor throughout the band's set), and a captivating frontman, this band is ripe for signing. Indeed, the Cliches' biggest problem lies with their sound engineer. Although visually mesmerizing, much of the impact of the band's material is lost because of inaudible lyrics. But once these live sound problems are fine-tuned, this Seattle import could have the L.A. music community by its ear.

—Elizabeth Shaw Green

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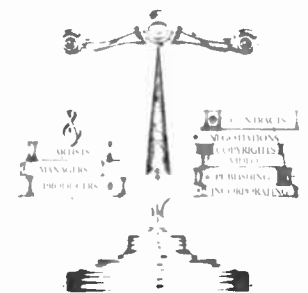
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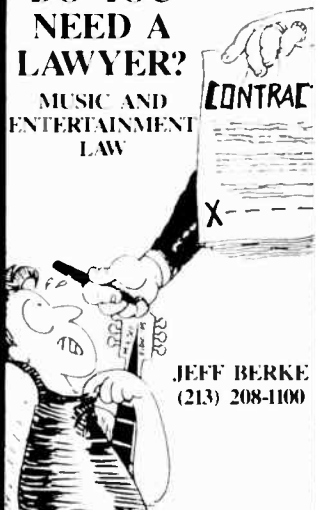
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Reviews

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Full Swing At My Place Santa Monica

□ **The Players:** Lorraine Feather, Charlotte Crossley, Bruce Scott, vocals; Tony Morales, drums; Bill Lanphier, bass; Grant Geissman, guitar; Greg Karukas, keyboards; Eddie Arkin, programming.

□ **Material:** Full Swing used this and one earlier gig at At My Place to introduce new material co-written by Lorraine Feather and Eddie Arkin, including "Big Fun," "Busted for Boppin'," "Palacio de Samba," and "Hypnotic Love." Arkin, steering a squadron of DX-7s and Emulators, brings to the new songs a modern drive and edge that melds very well with Full Swing's jazzy, Manhattan Transfer-ish vocal stylings. "Busted for Boppin'," with Bruce Scott taking the lead vocal, sounds like a hit to me. "Hypnotic Love" has commercial possibilities, too, but was marred somewhat in this performance by a too-busy interplay between live musicians and programmed tracks. Full Swing's earlier material, from their Planet Records album, *The Good Times Are Back*, stands up very well. They've also begun to tap a rich R&B groove with their cover of Marvin Gaye's "Can I Get a Witness."

□ **Musicianship:** Feather, Crossley, and Scott are consummately accomplished singers, handling a broad range of material with facility and ease. Full Swing always performs

with top-notch backing players. Guitarist Geissman has played with Chuck Mangione, bassist Lanphier with Madonna, and keyboardist Karukas with Melissa Manchester. Arkin arranges for artists including Laura Brannigan and Anne Murray. Morales (Feather's husband), the one constant member of an ensemble that shifts from gig to gig, leads the band, and is a crisp, organized, impeccable drummer.

□ **Performance:** Full Swing puts on a polished, show business-y performance. The trio's particular mixture of jazz and pop stylings with rock instrumentation gets richer, more interesting, and more individual with every show. Feather and Crossley have been with the group since its beginnings. Scott is, I think, the most pleasing and accessible stage personality of any of the (five) male singers who have worked with the trio so far. Crossley has a funky, crazy, bright-eyed style and a big raw voice. Feather's singing has acquired elegance, relaxation, and maturity over recent years. You will almost never hear ensemble singing this good.

□ **Summary:** Feather characterizes Full Swing's history as "a constant trickle of progress." I'd call it courage. After making their debut album with Richard Perry, they were left very much on their own, a situation that would have meant the end for two less determined personalities than Feather's and Crossley's. They've continued to create, and continued to perform, in the conviction that they have something worthwhile to say. They do, and it's great fun to listen to.—**Lawrence Henry**

Mahatma Lew & the Hosannas

*Blue Lagune Saloon
Marina del Rey*

□ **The Players:** "Mahatma" Lewis Moore, vocals; Andy Sykora, drums; Brad Rabuchin, guitar; Poli Klemmer, keyboards; Bill King, bass; "Rockin'" Robin Rader, sax; Lori Coleman, vocals; Lynn Bertles, vocals; Shelly O'Neil, vocals, fiddle.

□ **Material:** If God keeps a special place for Mahatma Lew & the Hosannas, it must be in the lounge of His private Holiday Inn. Anyone who has ever attempted to travel cheap has run into the local boy who attempts to recreate a Las Vegas floor show at his hometown Motel 6. Mahatma Lew parodies a traveling salesman's worst nightmare, yet his irreverent form belies some serious songwriting talent. "I Don't Dance" turns out to be danceable (of course), and the bratty "Too Late Now" is almost commercial. High points for the evening were the amphetamine-fortified cover of "Hit the Road, Jack" and "Don't Treat Me Like a Slut," wherein the Hosannas do their impression of Bette Midler's Harlettes.

□ **Musicianship:** Like musicologists on a goof, there is some intense talent behind the silly exterior. Saxophonist Rader gets some nasty sounds from an instrument half her own size, while guitarist Rabuchin makes great guitar leads seem almost too easy. Poli Klemmer's polysynth kept things a little off balance, using some of the cheapest-sounding patches known to man, and O'Neil's country fiddle added to the merriment by its very inclusion. The rhythm section of Sykora and King was not as tight as it could be, but after all, this was a first gig for drummer Sykora. Mahatma Lew talks more than he sings, playing a sort of master of ceremonies, but whatever vocal skills he lacks are more than made up for by the Hosannas. Coleman and Bertles, whether collectively or individually, have some of the gutsiest voices ever to send chills up a spine.

□ **Performance:** When a big band plays a small stage, there cannot logically be a whole lot of movement. The Hosannas



Full Swing: The good times are really back.

are choreographed to the point of insanity, yet the rest of the band remains static. There is nothing wrong with three beautiful, scantily-dressed females at the center of attention, but as the frontman, one would expect a lot more showmanship from Mahatma Lew. Perhaps if he were included in some of the choreography, or if he were more inclined to table-hop like some of his lounge lizard soul mates, Lew would appear more the ringleader of his circus, rather than just another member of the sideshow.

□ **Summary:** Mahatma Lew & the Hosannas successfully bridge the gap between comedy and music in the grand tradition of the early Tubes, or Dan Hicks & His Hot Licks. The sources of their parodies are not always completely evident, which is a tribute to their musical abilities. No one would ever confuse this with art, but *Saturday Night Live* fans should love it. This may not be the hot parody band of the Eighties, but at the moment, they are parody's only practitioners. As such, they deserve a listen.

—Tom Kidd



Les Evans of Cryptic Slaughter

Cryptic Slaughter

Radio City
Anaheim

□ **The Players:** Bill Crooks, bass, words; Scott Peterson, drums; Les Evans, guitar.

□ **Material:** Cryptic Slaughter is—you'd never guess by the name—a thrash metal band! This group is very young, the drummer and bass player being only 15; however, this trio is one of the better thrasher

bands I've seen. Their songs are the usual speed metal fare of violence, rebellion, and death, but they have somewhat of a melody to them—it's not just speed at 100 m.p.h. "Sudden Death," "Flesh of the Wench," "Reich of Torture," and "Life in the Grave" are a few of the band's more interesting numbers, and are enough to make your mother keep you home at nights.

□ **Musicianship:** Scott Peterson, the 15-year-old drummer, was the one to watch in this band. He was notably fast and kept the band together. Keep your eye on this kid. As far as the bass and guitar went, it was standard speed metal with heavy emphasis on speed and rhythm. Bill Crooks should also be noted for letting the audience hear what he was singing.

□ **Performance:** Well, what can you say about three sweaty guys thrashing up and down onstage? The audience loved them and had to be restrained several times by Radio City security, if that tells you anything. Cryptic Slaughter related well to the crowd, and in speed metal, that's what's important.

□ **Summary:** This band should be well known in a year's time. They're young, they're energetic, they have good material, and let's not forget that great drummer. This trio of thrashers seems to know exactly what they're doing, and have the ability to distinguish between a song and noise. That's what gives Cryptic Slaughter a little edge over the other speed metallers.

—Lemmy Loud

Valentino

The Troubadour
West Hollywood

□ **The Players:** Craig Edwards, lead vocals, keyboards, harp; Glenn Kenney, guitar; John Simon, drums, vocals; Danny Lullie, bass, backing vocals.

□ **Material:** Straight-ahead powerhouse hard rock that recalls the glory days of UFO and Montrose. Valentino's secret weapon is their tight, three-part vocal harmonies, which turn potentially forgettable hard rockers into catchy anthems. Songs that best took advantage of the harmonies and Edwards' keyboards were the most mem-

orable. "Lonely Woman Blues" and "Fade Away" were the standouts in an abbreviated set, which also included the mundane metal offerings "Liar" and "Save It!" Valentino's major problem is that their material needs modernization. Edwards played the keyboards infrequently, which lent a typical power trio attack for most of the set, and when he did play, he tended to rely on stock organ and synth sounds. Bringing in some Eighties touches would dramatically improve the band's shot at the big time.

□ **Musicianship:** As a whole, Valentino is very tight, with the sound of a veteran group. All the vocals were excellent, with Edwards possessing both power and range; Simon contributed strong vocals, including a lead vocal on one song. Valentino might want to employ this tactic more, allowing Edwards to concentrate on keys and effective vocal trade-offs with Simon. All four players were solid instrumentally, but each should try to refine a more distinctive style on his instrument.

□ **Performance:** Before the first note sounded, it was Edwards' show. He is a very confident frontman, who actually has developed his own style, a rare feat in L.A. rock bands. The rest of the band should take the vocalist's cue on dressing (white button-down shirts, suspenders, slacks, etc.), as this could be very effective combined with the band's name and a blistering hard rock assault. Edwards obviously has plenty of experience, as his raps were always right on the money. The rest of the band, however, made little contact with the audience; guitarist Kenney in particular needs to play to the audience more and show some flash.

□ **Summary:** This was Valentino's very first show in California after moving out from Miami recently, and it's a safe bet to say you'll be hearing a lot about them in the future. In terms of putting on a thunderous yet skin-tight musical show, they are far ahead of most L.A. rockers (who tend to place image before music). As they are, Valentino is in great shape to conquer the club circuit; but to get a major record deal, airplay, sales, etc., they're going to have to update their sound and play up the classy part of their image as a band.—Stu Simone

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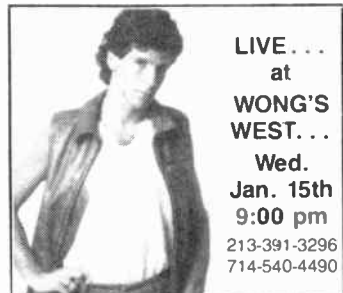
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Club Data

by S. L. Duff



New Wong's booker McGovern: "Maybe I do have a clue."

Venerable L.A. rocker **Tim McGovern** has taken over booking chores at **Madame Wong's West**. McGovern, who was with the early **Motels**, formed **Burning Sensations**, and now leads **Sado No**, was asked by Madame Esther to take over the booking of the club. McGovern says he is going to try to bring a "refreshing realism" to his job, and said he will try to keep an open mind to all bands and sidestep the politics that often predicate bookings. For example, he noted that groups that are often quite good come in, and for whatever reason, don't draw. McGovern says bands won't be excluded from playing just because of a bad draw, especially if the band is musically notable. "I guess bookers in the

past thought they were running Hollywood or something," said McGovern. "I'm just trying to run things the way Esther wants. She's been doing this a lot longer than I have. But I've produced records, and booked my own band for a year-and-a-half. No sooner did I turn those [band] responsibilities over to a professional management company, who shall remain nameless, that I started to have business problems. So, maybe I do have a clue."

McGovern has also started up a production company with engineer **Dave Jerden**, and together they are looking for bands to produce at **Eldorado Studios**. McGovern noted that his new job would allow him to view up to 176 bands a month. Good luck, Tim.

Tim's predecessor, **Cindy Jo Hinkleman**, had only worked at the club a few months prior to McGovern's arrival in early December. She claims she gave two weeks notice on December 2nd and two nights later, while with some friends at the **Lingerie**, she heard through the grapevine that McGovern had her job. Cindy is busy working as an engineer for **Drake-Chenault**, a radio consulting firm. She also has a syndicated radio show in Japan, and her own company, **Signature Sound**, produces radio jingles. Good luck to her, too.

Michael Fell, voted best club booker (along with ex-ex-Wong's booker **Jimmie Wood**), called in to say that no, he hasn't left the booking business to work in construction as was reported by his ex-employers, the **Troubadour**. Although Fell does have a contractor's license and does work in construction from time to time to make some extra cash, his main gig these days has been the formation of **Rockwest Attractions**. Fell's partner in the new company is **Michael J. Clemens**, formerly of **Royal Rock Attractions**. They will be "constructing" shows at **Gazzarri's**, **Roxy**, and elsewhere. **Bill Gazzarri**, incidentally, is in the market for new sound and lighting equipment, as he'll be beefing up both in early '86.

Ardie's, which used to be **Sardie's**, in Burbank, invited me out to see some live blues and enjoy some Creole/Cajun cooking. When I called back to accept, they had changed owners and, sadly, were no longer serving up live blues or live music of any kind. Things change so quickly 'round these parts.

Maynard Ferguson pulled out of a three-night stand at the **Roxy** on the 12th, 13th, and 14th of December, giving only one week's notice, according to promoter **Vicky Hamilton**. She bounced back by putting together two interesting last-minute shows which featured **Channel Three**, **Joneses**, and **Dogs of War** on the 13th, and **Club Adobe**, **Precious Metal**, and **New Marines** on the 14th.

Beachy at the **Music Machine** was a little miffed at my comments regarding the Machine's sound sys-

tem in the final issue of last year. He said their PA meets even the most stringent rider requirements of touring bands, and that if I've heard the PA sound bad, it was because of the individual band's inept soundmen, not his system. "Yeah, yeah," I thought, as I let him buy me a drink. Well, I do have to eat my words, because as headliners **Fear** hit the Machine stage, they sounded great. Sure enough, it was the Machine's house soundman turning the knobs, too. **Lee Ving** himself said it was the best sound they had in years, so I stand corrected. In the meantime, **Beachy** can be seen out from behind his booker's desk perched upon the drum throne with the **Que**, **David Lear's** band.

The **Whisky** had live music for the first time in about four years when the **American Ladds** played the club on December 19th. **Anne Kim**, formerly with TBA Media and KROQ radio, promoted the show. Rumors abounded about live music possibly returning to the legendary club on a permanent basis, but the show itself occurred after we went to the printer. We'll fill you in if anything comes of it.

Meanwhile, back at **Wong's**, movie star/teen idol **Michael J. Fox** performed his *Back to the Future* "Johnny B. Goode" routine with **Coyote in a Graveyard**. Fox had so much fun that he is rehearsing a whole set with the band, and will try it out on January 10th at the club.

The **Anti's** country jam Monday night series, called **Grand Ol' Anti**, got off to a slow start throughout December. The jams featured members of the **Silver Tears**, **Tin Star**, **Blow-Up**, the **Rave-Ups**, and others, but whether it will continue in January was undecided at press time.

UPCOMING: **Lions & Ghosts** at the **Roxy** on Jan. 11th, **Dogma Probe** and **Alisa** at the **Music Machine** on Jan. 2nd, **Meditations** at the Machine on the 4th, **Dr. Isiah Ross** (one-man blues band and author of "Cat's Squirrel") at the **Lingerie** the 17th of Jan., **Elektra's** new signing **Metal Church** at the **Country Club** Jan. 17th, and **Woody Herman & His All-Stars** at **Vine Street** Jan. 7-12th.



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Showcase

by Libby Molyneaux

Field Day

'The music industry is disgusting," says David Kaufman, Field Day's outspoken leader. And he should know. Since 1981, when the band was a three-piece known as MSQ, they have hooked up with a manager, booking agent, and lawyer. They put out an independent single which received college airplay, and in turn garnered much A&R interest. "We'll be a corporation in no time," Kaufman jokes.

Of course, missing from this happy picture is a record deal, which Kaufman insists they are "perilously close to." They consistently pack 'em in at Wong's West with their own brand of R&B-calypto-funk. The stage show is a veritable feast for the eyes, with colorful costumes and percussion devices culled from better junkyards and kitchens everywhere. Kaufman's percussive hubcap dates back to the earlier days of MSQ, although it's been replaced a few times. "MSQ was a musicians' band," he relates. "Musicians would go 'Great stuff,' but everybody else would just applaud politely." Their current sound—sophisticated, funky, and downright catchy—started to gel when they brought in percussionist Steven Reid, lead guitarist Daniel Norton, and vocalist Frieda Woody, which marked the transition from MSQ to Field Day.

"The concept of the band was 'music for everybody,'" recalls Kaufman. "One of our first gigs, the crowd was banging on the table with their beer cans and everybody was whacking on stuff. Not only can I relate to that but I can join in." Field Day goes out of its way to entertain. Every show is unique, with different costumes and songs. "We want to present something stylized, a show for the senses, but I take great care to make sure it's not Las Vegas." Kaufman may well be, as Norton jokes, one of the hardest working men in show business—or at least on the L.A. club scene. In a typical set, if he's not onstage singing or playing guitar, he's dancing frantically through the crowd with his hubcap. In fact, the entire band gives its all for one of the most energetic shows to be seen.

If Field Day is so great, why then no contract from the A&R guys? Despite the amount of inquiries, the A&R interest comes equipped with apprehension. "They always ask us, 'How do you market this band?' Other people have said the music is too complicated, too sophisticated," Kaufman sighs. "They're too worried about what's going to fit into what slot." Possibly, the A&R people don't know what to do with a band



Field Day: Percussive, danceable, and exciting. But... do you know where your hubcaps are?

that transcends race, age groups, and pigeonholing, but Kaufman insists the band is apolitical. "Politics and music have nothing to do with one another. I don't think there's any music in the whole world that's going to change anything political, ever. I don't care how hard the Clash bang it out or how many kids get riled up at a concert. It doesn't change anything."

That subject out of the way, Kaufman admits that Field Day does have a message to convey, but it isn't political. "We are a strong, socially conscious band," he explains. "The one thing that we want to get across is, as huge as the world is, everything in the world always starts with one person. That smallest possible scale is the root of how to make anything at all. I don't want to negate any type of audience. The more people that can be inspired to get up off their butts, great. The whole idea is to get people to make them shake it around, and then, on a subliminal level, still be saying something that's worth something. You don't want your message to the world to be 'Shake your body down to the ground!'"

Kaufman admits that the frustrations of holding various day jobs while putting his heart and soul into Field Day can take its toll. "I was ready to quit," he said. "I was stifled, not satisfied." Luckily, his friends and the other band members would hear of no such thing, and Kaufman was sent off to the Bahamas for two well-deserved weeks of R&R. He's back, tanned, and ready to continue the battle with gun-shy executives.

"Sometimes the progress seems so slow you think, 'Christ, there's nothing going on,'" Kaufman reflects. "This band has been doing it for

four years. If at any point we had packed it in, it would never be where it is today. The fact that it is sitting on the brink and about to happen is enough testimony that you gotta keep doing it. If you quit you don't get nothing but a sob story. If you can make people feel a little bit better when they walk out than when they walked in, you've gotten something across."

Field Day have broken their collective backs trying to please the labels in hot pursuit of them. Since the general consensus of executives is that they are too esoteric for Top-40 radio, their manager, Di, decided to turn the tables on the record companies. Di approached A&R people, publishers, and record companies, and asked them what they wanted the band to play in order to be on Top-40 radio. Out of 250 songs submitted, she picked 30 for the band to listen to.

"It was *horrendous*," says Kaufman. "We did 'rate-a-record' on 30 songs. There was one we sort of liked. It was mind-boggling to see what people thought we needed to sound like. It was a joke." What's a manager to do? Says Di, "We played the material they wanted us to play and now they still don't know what to do with us."

It's only a matter of time before someone will take a chance with Field Day. Kaufman knows this. "There are enough people that are interested. Everybody is paranoid about taking a giant plunge," he states.

"Somebody is going to wind up making a move and it's going to take off like a bat out of hell and everybody's going to go, 'I knew it was going to happen!'"

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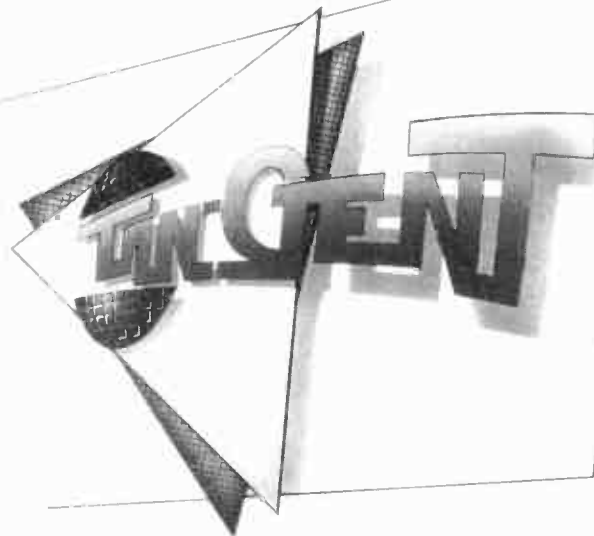
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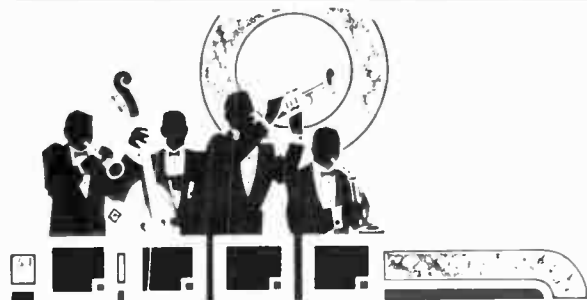


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- Pro rock drummer w/album creds, acoustic/electronic, sks keybd-oriented band w/grt songs & grt singer Bio kit avail Marc 818-842-6059
- Drummer wtd for estab'd pop R&R funk grp wkng on album prj & putting together live show Must sing backup Charles 213-469-3841
- Drummer? Someone w/class, like Vinnie Calula Do you want to play comm music? Brian 213-857-0568
- Female drummer wtd, pro att, creative, guts, backup vox a plus, for new band Mgr 213-656-1325
- Drummer wtd for forming glam rock band infl Kiss, Cheap Trick, Aerosmith Joe 213-869-0664
- CIRCUS, w/Jeff Collins, Engl guitarist faster than Malmsteen, auditioning drummers better than Aldrich w/long hair, gd-lking rock image, 18-24, grt equip 818-784-9378
- MOONDANCER sks tasty innov drummer for immed gds & recording Danceable modern rock Tough audition, 213-396-9276
- Drummer wtd by Christian guitarist to form band infl Led Zepp, Firm, Deep Purple, Rainbow, Queen 805-527-4593
- Estab'd female rock band sks new drummer, serious pros only Lena (eves) 816-524-4867
- Drummer wtd for orig rock grp Clapton, Bob Seger-type material Must be pro, No T40ers 818-989-3277
- Drummer wtd: Solid, strong, great time, funk/rock/dance 213-864-1459
- VON TRUST sks energetic dbl-lick monster, career-minded & dedicated only w/desire to make it to the top We have studio & tape John 213-822-4920
- Drummer wtd for orig playing/recording sit Modern snd w/C&W, blues, new wave infl Grt songs, label int, Mark 213-392-8007
- Drummer wtd for creative comm modern rock Must sing some lead & backups, infl Yes, Police, Asia, etc. Chrs pro Richard 213-928-6795
- Rock'n groove drummer wtd for orig band w/mgmt label infl Motown, ZZ Top, Stevie Nicks 818-787-8473
- Female drummer wtd for R&B band w/estab'd singer, pro att, positive att, guts, gd energy M. Mayall 213-656-1325
- Drummer wtd for country rock band Recording, live showcases, much label int Lili 213-276-6543
- Drummer wtd to form T40 band in Pasadena area Musically open-minded, willing to develop wkng band, Jeff 818-441-3479
- EXPLODING PARAKEET needs acoustic/electronic drummer for orig upbeat dance music. Floppy 213-545-0093
- Singer & keybdist need drummer, guitarist & bassist infl Cure, Sweetback, or newer synth underground rock Knows records Sasch 818-500-9154
- Experimental sound artist ala Eno wtd for band ala XTC, REM, U2 Interesting mx? No synth, poppers, pros, weekenders, or rock stars pls Really dedicated 213-851-5861
- ANGSTROM, a spiritual cosmic progr rock band creative music reflecting higher expressions of life, sks video & prod personnel for spectacular visual proj Stuart/Jeff 818-761-7365
- Male & female duo performing orig R&B rock pop needs talented proficient lead guitarist, bassist, synth/keybd plyr & drummer for backup band 213-854-3605
- Anyone interested in forming a band infl Pat Benatar, Journey, Foreigner, Bryan Adams call Marlow 213-871-3766
- Rehearsal studio wtd in San Fernando Valley by responsible band 24-hour access lockout on monthly basis 818-994-8369
- New York musician/producer/engineer sks new unusual & interesting music act for collab John 213-865-9145
- Major band w/infr 1 hits & pro digital mastered recordings needs investor or prod co to finance vinyl release & distr 818-330-6340
- Jeff Cullen of Circus is now taking applications for exp'd guitar technicians Must be able to handle expensive custom guitars & know amplification 818-784-9378
- Two serious songwriter/producers sks serious financial record producer/investor, serious a must Good songs, quality demos, have had good feedback Anthony 213-231-1282 Dempsey 213-234-5676

14 HORNS AVAILABLE

- Sexy young R&R sax plyr avail for grps currently plying Hollywood circuit Alexis Storm 818-980-2372
- Sax that cooks East Coast style—rock, soul, or blues Pros only Stan 818-994-4871
- Tough tandem tenor sax duo avail now, all styles 213-608-0256

14 HORNS WANTED

- Female sax/harmonica plyr wtd for new band Pro att, creative, guts, backup vox a plus Mgr 213-656-1325

15 SPECIALTIES

- Monster percussionist avail for orig rock, reggae, Latin band Richard Cantu 213-669-5812

13 DRUMMERS WANTED

- Drummer needed for band w/strong orig material. Must be adventurous w/kit meter Daniel 818-845-7357
- Psych folk rock artist w/infr album sks drummer Must sing high harmony & be able to tour High Frontier 818-508-9648
- Tight, sharp drummer needed. Guitar-charged groove & edge rock Enigma LP Band in West Valley, ages 22 Dean 818-716-7308
- Drummer wtd by POKETFUL, ong & T40 HR, currently booked through April '86 Att. exp. & lks musts Marty 714-534-6764
- Dbl-lick drummer wtd by metal band MUTINY We have mgmt, studio, PA, gigs Serious pros only 818-330-2873
- Drummer wtd for road work, must sing & have gd equip 818-366-8973
- Young drummer sks 18-22 grp that grooves, infl Bonham, Gainer, Ferns Ben 213-874-2505
- Male & female duo performing ong R&B rock pop needs talented, prof drummer for backup band 213-854-3605
- Drummer wtd for STRANGE BEHAVIOR, all-ong Engl-infr glam band Lee 213-379-6561
- Pro rock drummer wtd who sings & is a songwriter for melodic R&R band w/upcoming dates 213-656-5227
- Glam band sks drummer infl Kiss, Hanoi Rocks, Gd-lking, glam image, gd equip Stuart & Robbi 213-854-0980
- Hey cats & rockers! This singer needs an outasight drummer for wkg 50s classics rockability combo 20-25 yrs wkng image pref Bill 818-763-3722
- Guitarist & keybdist w/rehearsal studio sk powerhouse drummer w/long hair, image, & stage pres to join melodic HR band 818-996-6509

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- Wanted: Dead or alive Quality bassist, drummer, 2nd guitarist, all w/vox pref, to join w/lex-Cheer guitarist to form killer show band Philippe 714-786-7735
- Producers, talent scouts, agents, directors, composers, arrangers, record producers, booking agencies, & singers needed for Hollywood Singing Contest 213-464-6043/460-2072
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- Film & video maniac wtd to create & direct avant-garde B/W epics I have recording studio & album Pls help Beyond M TV Zamp 213-534-3129
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- Aftn country musicians the California Country Music Assn has free hotline for plyrs skng bands & bands skng plyrs Country only 818-948-2576
- Exp'd vocalist & drummer skng guitarist & bassist for melodic glam metal band Sing backups, gd stage pres pro only pls Jim/Jeff 805-251-3778
- Estab'd actor skng keybds, bass & drums Must be xlt, sight-reader, able to rehearse Songwriters pref, gd copy for new-comers Linda Roberts 818-506-5629
- Road crew needed for R&R band, dedicated, hd-wkng George 213-394-4664
- Wanted: Investment co or mgmt interested in producing &/or backing HR grp 818-764-3605
- Two female vocalists/writers skng financial backing If you like the Pointer Sisters then you can't go wrong with us Tina/Hope 213-215-1692
- Arranger/film avail, will work on spec Robert818-762-1704
- Sitarist wtd for Arts Foundation proj Bob Gillette 714-681-2410
- Roadie help needed by HM band THRUST for upcoming Rocky show Jan 4th James 818-505-0268
- L.A. Lil, extremely talented singer/songwriter/guitarist, sks financial aid 213-276-6543
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- Christian composer/singer/arranger/lyricist avail infl Steve Taylor, Daniel Amos Also play bass, synth, guitar Ministry bands only Hutch 714-994-6645
- Female vocalist w/EP proj needs new material in American & Southern rock 213-669-3323
- Singer/lyricist needs arranger/composer to collab w/ on T40 songs Have industry contacts Call after 8 pm, serious only 213-482-5178
- Song wanted: Vocalist needs country song ala Juice Newton Break II to Mo-Gently for recording 213-306-3309
- Singer/songwriter w/album credits sks solid rhythm section for recording & band infl Petty CCR Stones 213-874-4385
- Pro arranger/keyboardist/producer widemo studio sks compl lyrics w/o music for collab Lyrics to Nesbitt 1825 N Wilcox #2, L A CA 90028
- Award-winning songwriter w/many styles sks publishing deal &/or staff writer pos Neil Blackwell 818-763-2739
- Singer/guitarist/keyboardist/songwriter infl Springsteen, Morrison Bowie etc sks to form/join R&R band Lots of strong orig. all styles, except HM Andy 818-505-9021
- Comm songwriter/keyboardist sks pro qual vocalist for collab on pop rock music image & att important Pros only Kent 818-508-0139
- Wanted: Hit songs all styles Mail tape to LSR Prods, P O Box 38593 L A CA 90038
- What a shame, all of L A's songwriters are duds! Send hits to Clysian Records 16678 Sargent Pl L A CA 90026
- Producer/publisher needs orig T40 R&B material only Tape & resume to Mark I Prods, 13826 Califa St Van Nuys CA 91401
- Christian singer/songwriter/bassist sks to join or form band infl Art Boy's Crumbacher Daniel Amos 714-994-6645
- Lyricist/singer shopping for album material & movie proj Charles 213-395-7525
- Lyricist sks compl comm pop & R&B melodies for collab Richard 213-731-3085
- Versatile, prolific lyricist/singer, some composing, w/it song-plugging conn's, sks producer/composer for collab Pref publ'd Maroon 818-508-7994
- Pro Spanish lyricist needed to translate songs from English to Spanish, ala Juho Iglesias 213-394-7746
- Female vocalist skng pop rock dance material Have own studio, will provide grt demo Kathy 818-787-6096
- Composer/lyricist/vocalist sks another composer/lyricist/vocalist for new age pop duo hit team James 213-384-7751
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- I am lking for very comm songs for a female artist. Roberta Blank, 13906 Ventura Blvd., Sherman Oaks, CA 91423 213-464-8381
- Songs wtd for new female artist Fresh new avant-rock/pop only, infl Lennox, Armatrading, Anderson, Bush Tape/lyrics/SASE, Headtrap Prods, P O Box 8591, Universal City, CA 91602
- Songwriter/performer, pop/rock, w/talent, wtd to join forces w/same for far-reaching band Alex 213-652-5686
- Literate lyricist sks dynamic singer/composer If you've got the tunes, I've the words & vice versa Bob213-833-4206
- Lyricist avail for pro composers Maureen Mathis 213-656-9492
- Publ'd credited female songwriter 22, w/current album, sks guitarist or keyboardist for collab Have contacts, will do demo 818-708-3789

16 SONGWRITERS

- Writer/singer/guitarist sks band to work ala Sting, Straights, Dylan, Jones Direction Local Santa Monica area pref 25-35 Frank 213-456-8659
- Wanted: Orig R&B rock tunes for recording & live infl Patty Smythe, Tina Turner Eurythmics Best cass to 844 3rd "B", Santa Monica, CA 90403
- Except I lead vocalist/songwriter wtd by extraordinary lead guitarist for collab & formation of 4-pc HR band 213-202-9257
- Singer/lyricist writer, R&B punk funk infl James Brown, Doors Frankie Goes to Hollywood, sks pros who read, write, & enjoy collab Drew 213-876-3989
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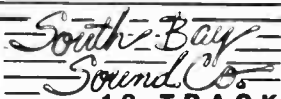
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